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VOLUME 8, NUMBER 2 MARCH 1979 PDC $2.50

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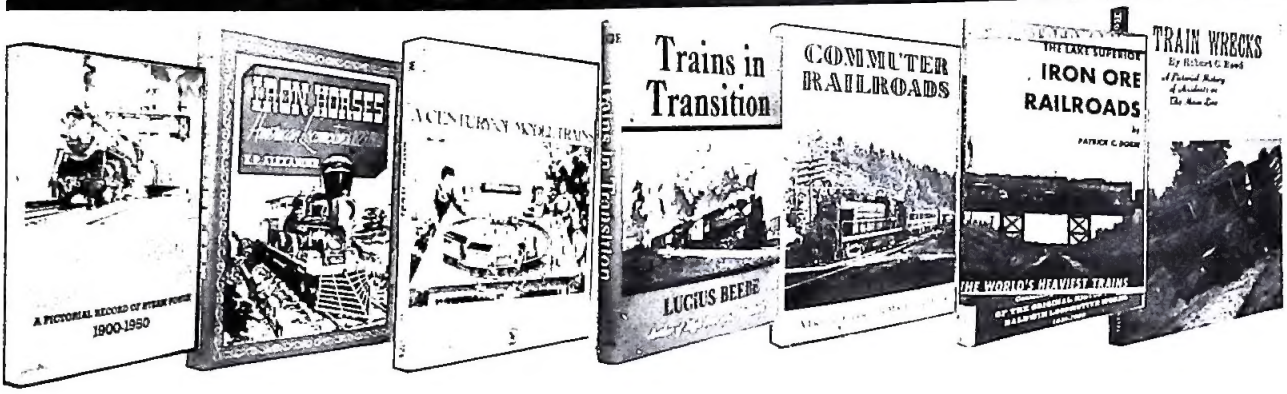

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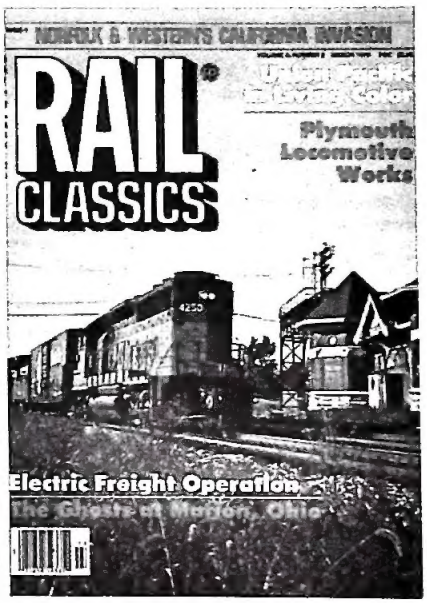
MARCH 1979



On the Cover—A Chessie System Geep rolls through Marion, Ohio. For more on this railroad city see the story beginning on page 24. John Uckley photo.

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RAIL MAIL

Too Many Miles

I was glad to see Lee Berglund's "Missouri Pacific Through Kansas" in the November 1978 issue of *Rail Classics.* I noted one small error and that was the mileage of the crew districts from Hoisington to Council Grove, which is 134 miles rather than 150.

It is good to see articles such as this on often neglected roads such as the Mopac.

Tony Fay
Osawatomie, Kansas

Hate Those New Numbers!

I just received the first copy of my *Rail Classics* subscription, and the mix of subjects, along with the color photos and other features, not to mention a few news items that other railfan magazines missed, made it an entertaining bit of reading. In fact, the article on Lucille Boston has me interested enough to write to LUCX, Inc. for details.

One minor fluff I'd like to bring to your attention concerns the photo of Conrail #1911 on page 55. Even though the unit was built in 1978, the GE model designation uses the year the model was introduced, making the unit a B23-7, not B23-8.

Vincent A. Syrek
Bellerose Terrace, NY 11426

We Agree

I thoroughly enjoyed the story, "Steam on the Chessie," in the November 1978 issue of *Rail Classics.* Vance Roth's photography was superb!

W. F. Howes, Jr.
Vice President
Casualty Prevention Dept.
Chessie System
Cleveland, Ohio

One Reader's Report

Your July 1978 issue of *Rail Classics* is a good addition to my railroad library of magazines and books.

Recently the writer entrained on the *Lake Shore Limited* to and from Chicago. Roadbed? Excellent. Top speed en route, about 90 mph. Attention to passengers, very good, Equipment? Some flaws; Lake Shore awaits new Amfleet cars. Patronage on a weekend in August: satisfactory. Carried approximately 289 passengers, New York-Chicago that time. Passenger comment, mostly good.

Conrail flaws: failure to raze burnt, vandalized former Englewood Station on Chicago's south side.

A. H. Rice
Heartland Enterprise
Toledo, Ohio

Wrong Direction

First of all, I enjoy reading your magazine very much, but in the November issue I found some inexcusable errors for a magazine of your caliber. The article on "Cuesta Pass" on the Southern Pacific, which was an excellent article, states that the *Coast Starlight* is traveling westbound, when in actuality it travels north and south.

Lewis D. Stiles III
Houston, Texas

(Sorry Lewis, you lose. All trains on the Southern Pacific travels "east" or "west" regardless of their actual compass heading. Trains going to San Francisco (SP's headquarters) are eastbound. Without this system you would have trains that could easily be a westbound one minute and an eastbound just a few miles away. Ed.)

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ON THE RAILS

By Ed Stauss

Penn Central is back, all reorganized and solvent. The new PC is in real estate, hotels, amusement parks, refineries, and pipelines, but one thing it definitely no longer has is a railroad.

* * *

CONRAIL PROFILE: Conrail operates 17,000 route miles with 4,619 diesel and electric locomotives. They have 136,415 freight cars, 2,127 cabooses and 15 major classification yards. Although nominally a freight railroad, Conrail operates more daily passenger trains (1,868) than freight trains (1,363).

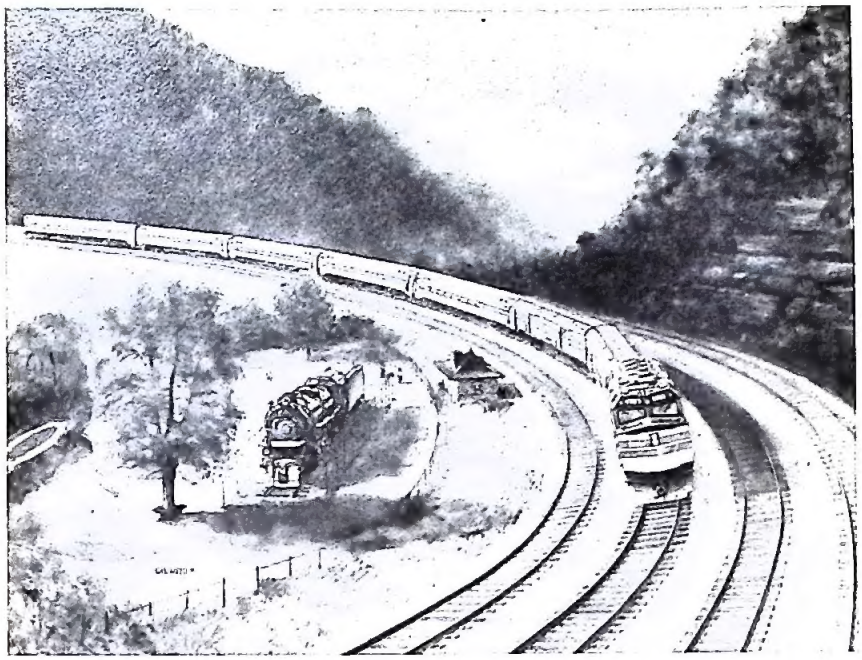
CONRAIL NEWS. Thirty trackmen have been added to the **Allentown, Pennsylvania** workforce to complete a main-line bypass, install a new weigh-in-motion scale, construct a receiving yard and add eight new classification tracks before winter.

A $3.6 million improvement project has been launched at Conrail's large **Collinwood Yard** on the east side of Cleveland which in two years will provide for a more efficient flow of traffic for Cleveland and northeastern Ohio. The yard's principal function has changed through the years, but its layout has remained the same. The present east and westbound yards will be combined while other changes will eliminate double-handling and cross-switching.

Conrail has restructured its **marketing department** into five business groups—automotive (specialized auto parts box cars and auto-carrying flat cars); box car and intermodal; covered hopper and tank; gondola and flat; and open-top hopper. Specialists will manage commodity-based lines of business and a planning staff will integrate marketplace needs with the freight car fleet management.

Oak Island Yard at **Newark, New Jersey** will be converted into a major classification center with a two-year, $19.1 million program. Completion is scheduled for 1980. The yard was originally opened by Lehigh Valley Railroad in 1927 as a hump retarder yard.

Conrail reported a **net loss** of $48.5 million on revenue of $904.7 million for third quarter, 1978. Future results will be aided by a new labor agreement with United Transportation Union which provides for



View on Amtrak's 1979 calendar which will be printed in full color.

a gradual reduction in crew size on an attrition basis.

Through the end of 1978, Conrail will have invested more than $1.6 billion in track rehabilitation and improvements and equipment acquisition and repair.

* * *

Southern Pacific plans to merge with **Seaboard Coast Line** remain stalled while **Chessie** takes a look at SCL. Either way SP, which owns 10% of SCL, will be involved.

* * *

San Diego's second rail connection to the outside world is apparently assured of being restored to service. The ICC abandonment hearings resulted in an order to restore while the Metropolitan Transit Development Board plans to do it even if SP (San Diego and Arizona Eastern) doesn't. Currently SP's local lines around San Diego are served by SP via a Santa Fe interchange. All San Diego traffic arrives over the single-track Surf Line of ATSF.

* * *

A 22 percent increase in coal rates has encouraged **Louisville & Nashville Railroad** to order 60 additional locomotives for 1979 delivery. This brings to 130 the total new units ordered by L&N this year.

* * *

Rock Island has become the seventh railroad to receive federal funds under Title V of the 4-R Act which will allow them to rebuild 2,900 freight cars, make shop improvements, and buy nineteen locomotives.

Railroads are always being sued by accident victims, but the **Milwaukee Road,** reasoning it's a two-way street, is, for the first time in its 127-year history, suing employees for alleged negligence in a February, 1977 collision between two Milwaukee Road trains in which a brakeman died and one engineer lost a leg. Milwaukee Road is suing the crew of the westbound train for damages to equipment, freight and crew members from the eastbound train. Milwaukee's lawyer is not deterred by limited collection potential from the employees, but rather says, "We're suing on principal. Workers get sloppy when the rules aren't followed. Maybe this lawsuit will help get the message out."

* * *

Nine grade crossings were eliminated in the City of Alhambra, California by a $20 million project which lowered the tracks of the Southern Pacific Railroad for 3.2 miles. This grade separation was unusual in that the grade of the rail line was changed rather than that of the streets. El Paso has also completed a rail lowering project of similar magnitude.

* * *

Union Pacific is building a new $38.5 million westbound classification yard at North Platte. The project, calling for approximately 103 miles of track, is expected to be completed in 1980.

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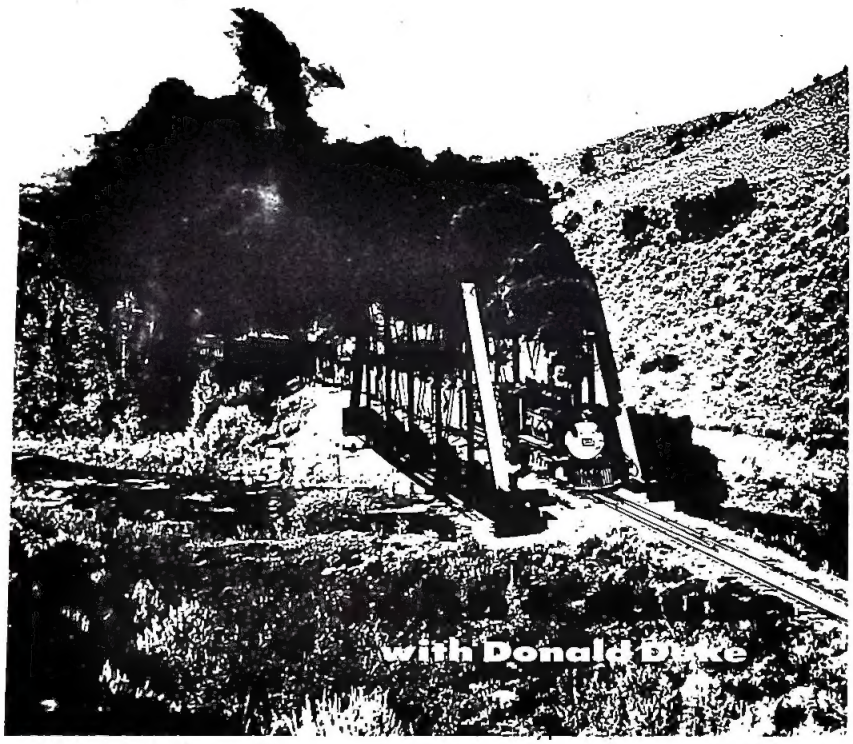
AMERICAN NARROW GAUGE



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This book of superb photographs expertly integrated into a sparkling text fires the imagination of those who remember the small steam locomotives that climbed Marshall Pass or the *Galloping Goose* that used to clatter over Ophir trestle. Here is the *American Narrow Gauge* — the last slice of it — and served up in easy-to-read style with a matchless picture collection of slim gauge railroading. **24.95**

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Orchard, Colorado has been rebuilt as a 19th Century western community, including a depot and **Union Pacific** train to be used in filming **Centennial,** an NBC TV series.

* * *

While eastern railroads are barely able to keep their present track alignments in good shape, western roads are busy putting in **major track line changes** to straighten curves and level hills. Santa Fe recently eliminated that last sharp curve in Cajon Pass with reconstruction of Sullivan's Curve in California. Union Pacific has performed its share such as the 1¼-mile project at Minthorn, Oregon. On the Umatilla Indian Reservation in Oregon, UP is making the first line change in that area since the track was first laid in 1880. Main object is to eliminate speed restrictions of 25 mph and lower.

* * *

Two historic silent **railroad feature films** will be shown at Denver's Paramount Theater on February 21 and 22, 1979. Both to be shown only once, they are **The Iron Horse** filmed in 1924 on the Virginia & Truckee and **The White Desert** filmed in 1925 on the Denver & Salt Lake's Rollins Pass line. These are benefit showings for the Colorado Railroad Museum. For information, send stamped, self-addressed envelope to Intermountain Chapter, NRHS, Film Office, P.O. Box 5181, Denver, CO 80217.

* * *

Commuters at the **Hoboken Railroad Terminal** no longer get train information from colored light codes. Conrail has installed a $110,000 computer train information system which displays data on the next sixteen trains scheduled to depart.

* * *

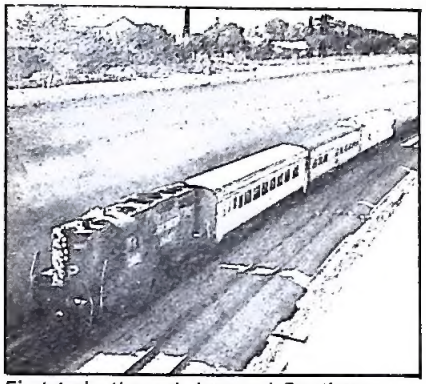
Train with the best **on-time record** for Amtrak is the Oakland-Bakersfield, **California San Joaquin** which made it in on time 96.7% of its trips.

* * *

Nine former **Cleveland PCC streetcars** that have operated in Toronto since 1953 have been returned to the Cleveland area to operate on the Shaker Rapid rail line. The cars first operated in Cleveland in 1946 and are still useful transit vehicles, proving once again the durability of electric rail cars.

* * *

Park Street Station in Boston is part of the 81-year-old first subway in the United States and is still in constant service. It was recently honored in a ceremony at the Boston Common entrance by the American Society of Civil Engineers. The subway was an instant success, carrying 100,000 riders on the first day



First train through lowered Southern Pacific tracks at Alhambra, California. Denis Dunning photo

and the station is still the busiest on the entire MBTA system.

The Seashore Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport, Maine, has begun a $500,000 improvement program including a visitor's center, exhibits, extension of trolley rides and expansion of the restoration shop. The trolley line will be extended a half mile to a picnic area with nature trail and Atlantic Ocean overlook. Incorporated in 1941, the museum has grown to be a major attraction.

* * *

AMTRAK

Dallas has developed an elegant Union Station with features reminiscent of grand railway stations of the past. Upgraded with an $8.3 million local bond issue and $2 million in private capital for a restaurant, the Paradise. The station is also connected by an under track tunnel to a modern complex including a 1000-room Hyatt Regency hotel, a sports arena and a 562-foot observation tower.

* * *

First direct rail passenger service to **Niagara Falls** in 17 years has been achieved by Amtrak, rerouting two Buffalo trains and eliminating a bus connection.

* * *

The Washington branch of the New York-Kansas City **National Limited,** now operating daily, joins with the main section of the train at Philadelphia's 30th Street Station. The Washington section formerly operated three times weekly to and from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

* * *

Horseshoe Curve, Pennsylvania is featured on this year's **Amtrak calendar** which can be ordered now. Measuring 24 by 33 inches, in vertical format, it uses a full-color painting by noted rail artist Gil Reid who has done the Amtrak calendar for the past five years. Send a check for $4.00 (tax and postage included) to Amtrak Calendar, Western Folder, 850 W. Fullerton Avenue, Addison, IL 60101.

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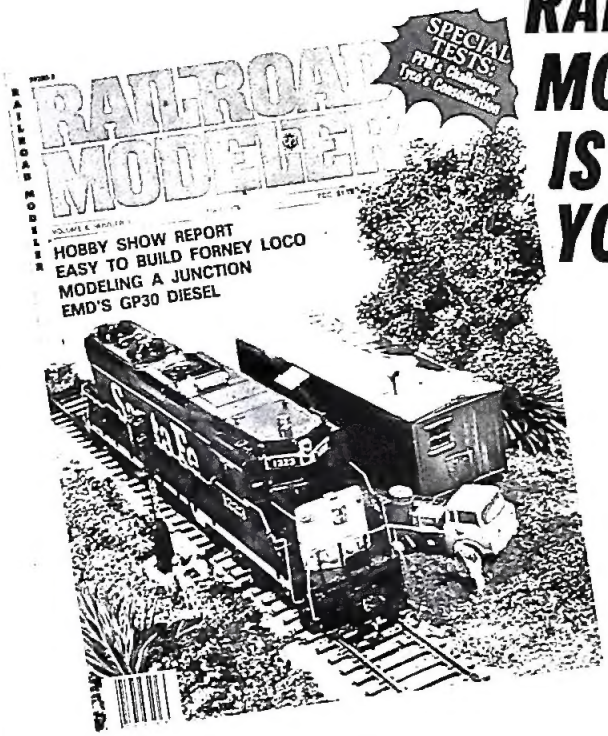

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Photos by the author

NW's California Invasion

Norfolk & Western's strike meant a blessing for a couple of power short western carriers

By Gary G. Allen

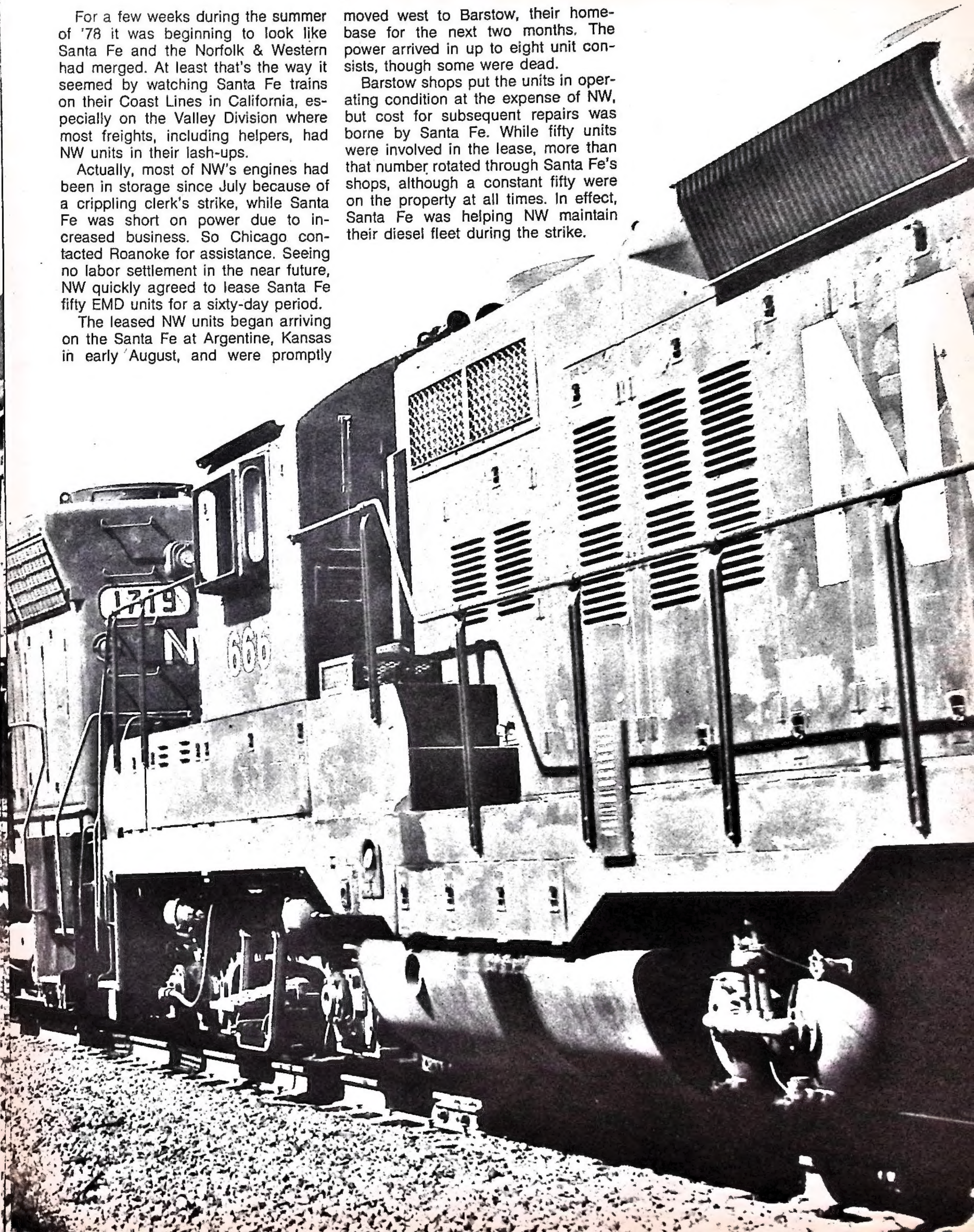
Strange country for the NW, a pair of the black units help an eastbound "around the loop" at Walong, California. Seven ATSF units are just ahead of the foreign power.

For a few weeks during the summer of '78 it was beginning to look like Santa Fe and the Norfolk & Western had merged. At least that's the way it seemed by watching Santa Fe trains on their Coast Lines in California, especially on the Valley Division where most freights, including helpers, had NW units in their lash-ups.

Actually, most of NW's engines had been in storage since July because of a crippling clerk's strike, while Santa Fe was short on power due to increased business. So Chicago contacted Roanoke for assistance. Seeing no labor settlement in the near future, NW quickly agreed to lease Santa Fe fifty EMD units for a sixty-day period.

The leased NW units began arriving on the Santa Fe at Argentine, Kansas in early August, and were promptly moved west to Barstow, their home-base for the next two months. The power arrived in up to eight unit consists, though some were dead.

Barstow shops put the units in operating condition at the expense of NW, but cost for subsequent repairs was borne by Santa Fe. While fifty units were involved in the lease, more than that number rotated through Santa Fe's shops, although a constant fifty were on the property at all times. In effect, Santa Fe was helping NW maintain their diesel fleet during the strike.



The last day of NW power on the Santa Fe sees #1646 and #1507 backing up for fuel at Bakersfield before heading for Barstow.

#6100 was the last NW unit to pass through Bakersfield, as seen on October 4th, en route from Richmond.

Most of the units were operated between Barstow and Bakersfield, including helper service, though NW diesels reached virtually all points on the Coast Lines, including Richmond, Los Angeles, San Diego and even Phoenix. Officially, no NW units were run on the point, since the radios had been removed prior to their movement west. However, reports persist that in a couple of isolated instances Roanoke's finest did indeed lead Santa Fe trains in Southern California, including a set of solid NW power coming into Los Angeles over the Third District.

In any event, since Santa Fe doesn't engage in run-through or pool power with other roads on their Coast Lines, the black engines with NW in bold white letters added an interesting, if not very colorful variety to the usual blue and yellow livery of their host's units. Some of the leased engines still wore the obsolete blue paint scheme with "Norfolk & Western" spelled out in small yellow letters.

But Santa Fe wasn't the only western carrier to lease NW power. Southern Pacific, also short on power, had been negotiating with the Chessie System for units. However, Chessie needed all

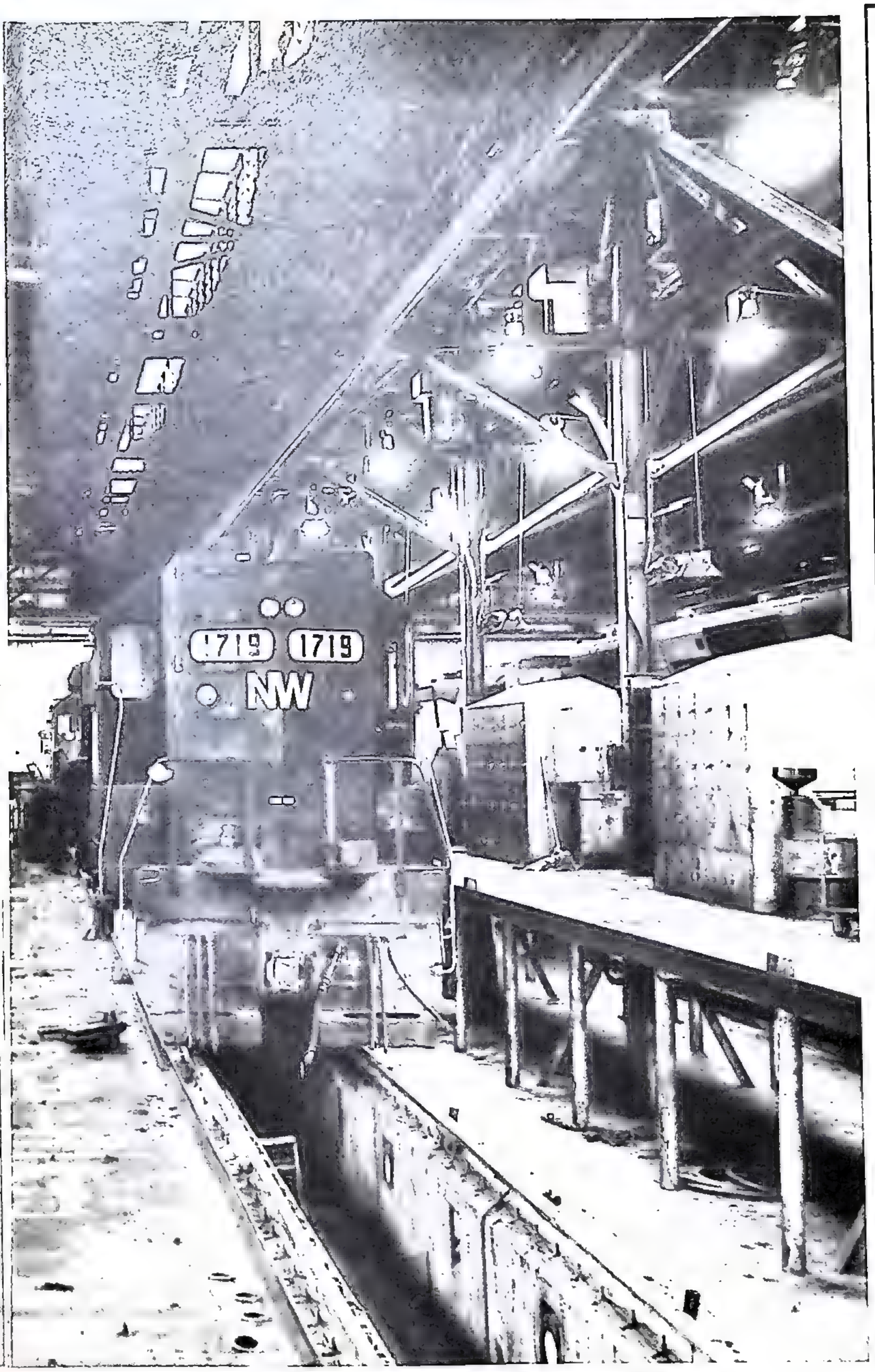
SD45 #5508 leads an eastbound with three NW units, displaying both old and new paint schemes, through Mojave and onto Santa Fe iron, on its way to Barstow.

A real mixed bag was seen on the Southern Pacific with two NW units (#1641 and #1571) followed by Union Pacific #3178, eastbound at

N&W Power Leased by Southern Pacific

Road #	*Model*
211	GP35
226	GP35
227	GP35
527	GP30
672	GP9
795	GP9
840	GP9
863	GP9
889	GP9
912	GP9
926	GP18
936	GP18
949	GP18
1308	GP35
1318	GP35
1323	GP35
1325	GP35
1347	GP40
1348	GP40
1360	GP40
1378	GP40
1379	GP40
1511	SD35
1523	SD35
1571	SD35
1590	SD40
1641	SD40-2
1742	SD45
1787	SD45
1809	SD45
1811	SD45
4129	GP38AC
6087	SD40-2
6112	SD40-2
6113	SD40-2
6130	SD40-2
6134	SD40-2
6150	SD40-2
6161	SD40-2
6172	SD40-2

The engine house at Barstow saw a great many black units during the short lease. Here, high nose SD45 1719 makes itself at home.

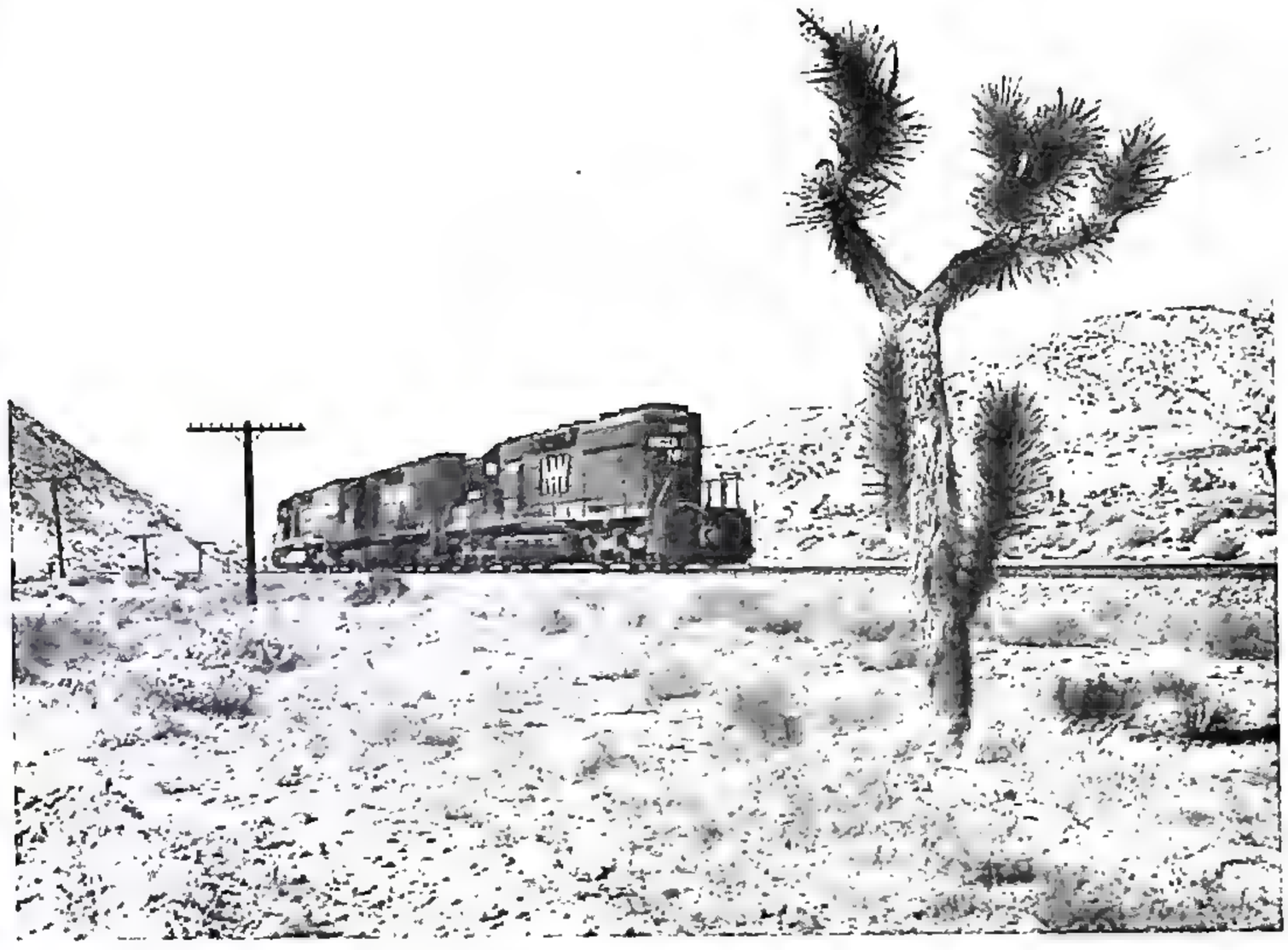


N&W Power Leased by Santa Fe

Road #	*Model*
217	GP35
222	GP35
528	GP30
529	GP30
541	GP30
632	GP9
644	GP9
645	GP9
664	GP9
666	GP9
673	GP9
724	GP9
800	GP9
815	GP9
906	GP9
945	GP18
1307	GP35
1309	GP35
1333	GP40
1336	GP40
1338	GP40
1353	GP40
1365	GP40
1373	GP40
1507	SD35
1534	SD35
1545	SD35
1556	SD35
1565	SD35
1605	SD40
1614	SD40
1646	SD40-2
1707	SD45
1712	SD45
1714	SD45
1719	SD45
1730	SD45
1731	SD45
1737	SD45
1738	SD45
1743	SD45
1765	SD45
1768	SD45
1782	SD45
1788	SD45
1796	SD45
1797	SD45
1813	SD45
2912	GP35
4148	GP38AC
6100	SD40-2
6144	SD40-2
6156	SD40-2
6186	SD40-2

It almost looks as though the Santa Fe had given most of their power to someone else, as four NW units and a single Santa Fe on the point work a freight through Cammeron, California in September.

Swinging around the loop at Caliente, the Santa Fe, for once, outnumbers Norfolk & Western.



It's more western than Norfolk, as an SD40-2 works in helper service over the Tehachapis on the Southern Pacific.

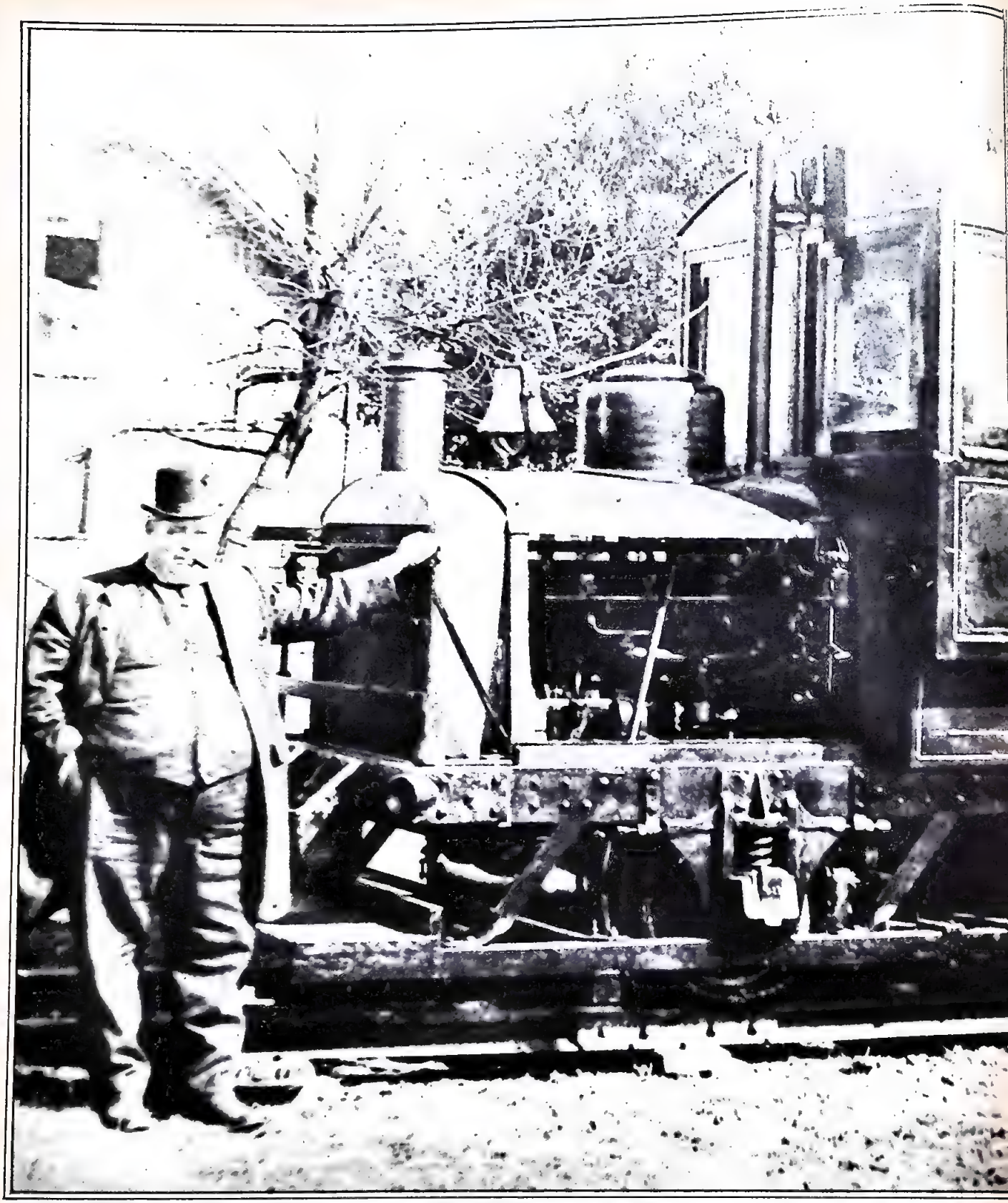
the power it could get due to the increased load thrown on them by NW's strike, and the deal fell through. So in late August Espee turned to NW for the lease of forty EMD units. This was an open ended lease, and when the strike ended Espee promptly returned the units.

Most of the leased engines on the SP worked on the T&NO and Cotton Belt lines, but several NW units showed up in California. Unlike Santa Fe, Espee wasn't at all bashful about operating NW power on the point. The forty leased units were in addition to the regular power-swap agreement between NW and Espee.

In late September the clerk's strike spread to other crafts and railroads across the country, so the Federal Court stepped in with a temporary injunction that sent everybody back to work, including NW. Santa Fe's lease was about up, and they wanted to extend it, but NW needed its units. In a matter of hours most of the fifty units were released by Barstow and working their way home on just about every eastbound. By October 4th only eight NW engines remained in Southern California, most in the shops at Barstow being prepared for movement east.

The previous day three NW units were dispatched west on a hot, power-short freight bound for Richmond. After a quick turn-around, on October 4th NW units 1507 and 1646 arrived in Bakersfield on an eastbound at 3:30 p.m., followed a few minutes by another train with NW 6100. The three NW units were taken off their trains for servicing. Before the night was over they would make one last swing around the Tehachapi Loop en route eastbound to Barstow, on their way home. But one unit, NW 1738, would not leave within the time period of the lease. The SD45 had suffered minor damage in a accident at Monolith a month before, and spent half of October in the shops at San Bernardino being repaired, before finally heading home.

Far from home rails and the familiar pastoral countryside of Virginia, the coal fields of West Virginia and the farmlands of Ohio, the leased NW units had found the contrasts in geography and climate of California to their liking. From the hot, arid Mojave Desert with its grotesquely shaped Joshua Trees, past the pounding surf of the Pacific Ocean, to the suburbs of Los Angeles in the shadows of tall palms, the NW power functioned quite well for Santa Fe on its visit to the west coast.



Photos by the author except as noted

Harley H. Fate, president of J.D. Fate Co. (predecessor of Plymouth Locomotive Works), stands with one of his first creations in this 1915 view.
Plymouth Collection

PLYMOUTH--the Locomotive People

By John J. Hilton

Question: What do the Korea Electric Company and the Strasburg Railroad have in common?

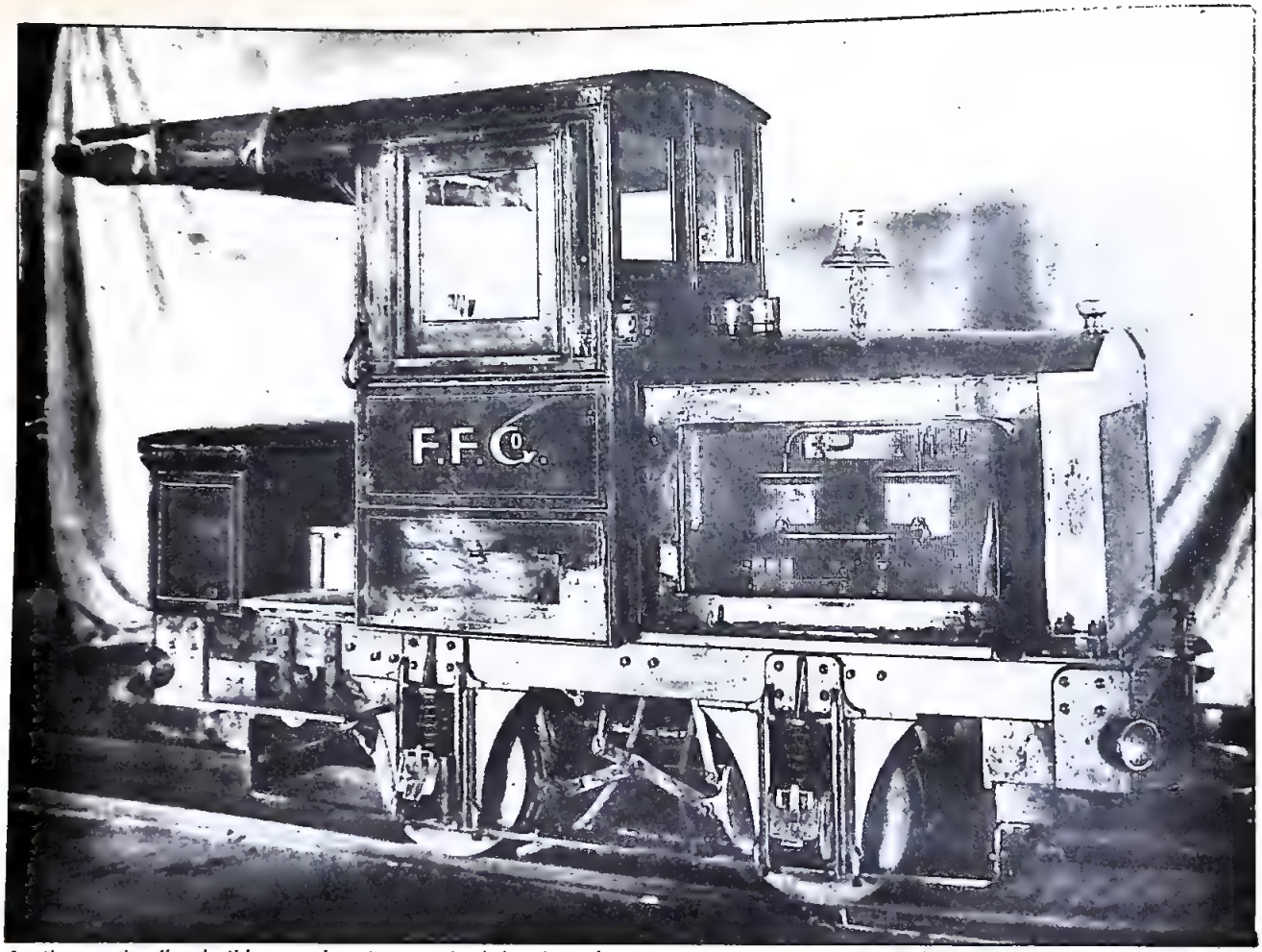
Answer: Nothing, except for the fact they both operate locomotives built by the Plymouth Locomotive Works.

This firm, located in north central Ohio, has been turning out internal combustion powered locomotives for the past 65 years. The company and its predecessors have been in the industrial machinery manufacturing business since 1882. The firm got its start as the Fate & Gunsaullus Co. which manufactured brick and tile making equipment. In 1892 J. D. Fate bought out his partner, and formed the J. D. Fate Company, still building the same ceramic making machinery.

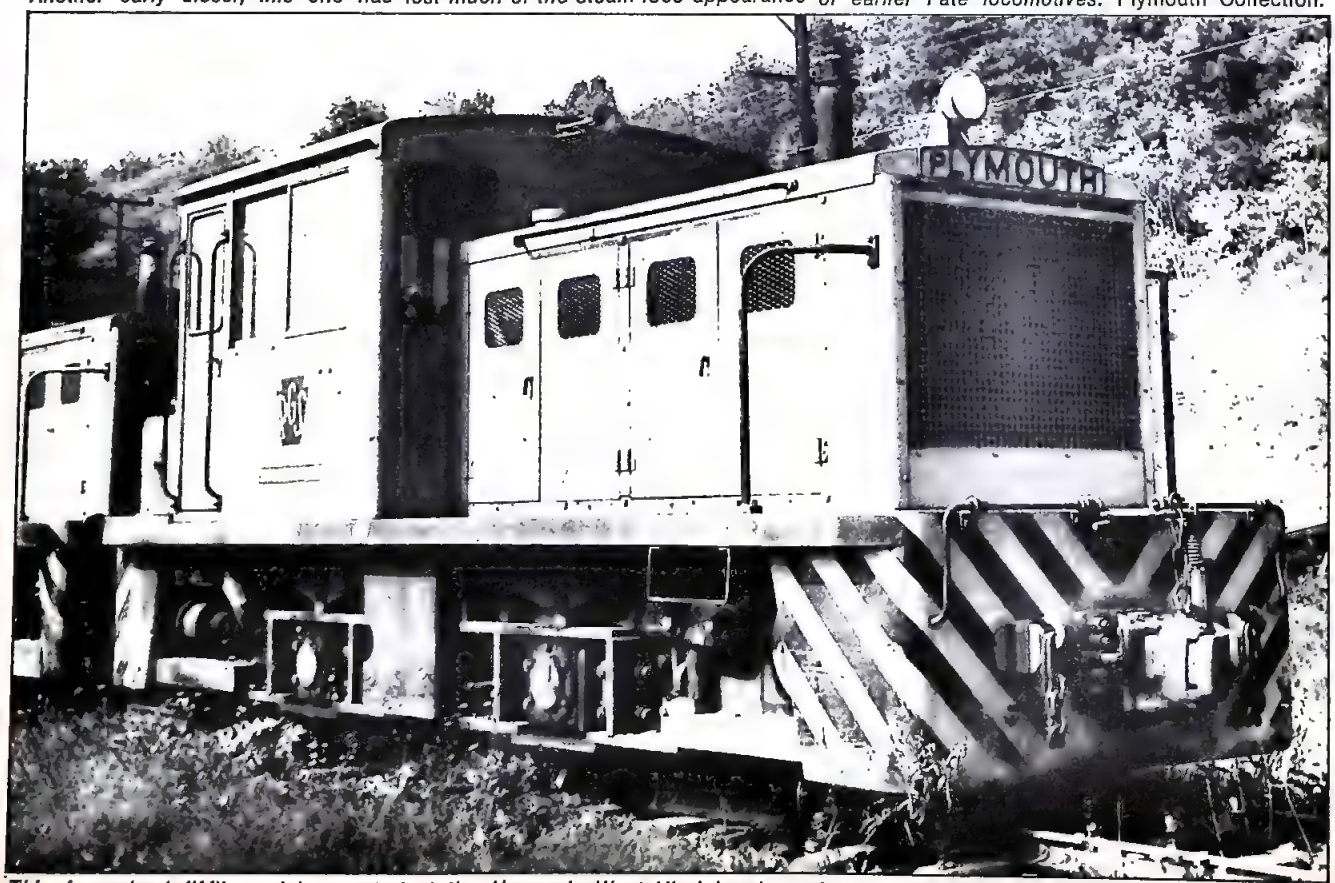
In 1909 the company got interested in the building of gasoline powered vehicles, and began turning out trucks, buses, and cars. The venture was short lived, however, the total production during the period (1909-1915) being only about 200 vehicles. During this time the company did build the first Plymouth automobile, (no relation to the Plymouth built by the Chrysler Corp. in later years). The car was not a great success, and only three were built. In 1914, the owner of the Bigelow Clay Co. of New London, Ohio asked the Fate Company to build him a gasoline powered locomotive to replace the mules he used as motive power to move railroad cars around his plant. Fate responded with an 18 h.p. locomotive and thus was born the Plymouth Locomotive Works.

In 1919, J. D. Fate merged with the Root-Heath Foundry and Manufacturing Co., producers of shoe making machinery. The new firm was known (quite naturally) as the Fate-Root-Heath Company. The new conglomerate continued building clay working machinery, industrial locomotives, and added a line of lawn mower sharpening machines. In the 1930's, the company turned out a line of farm tractors and called them (as one might expect), Plymouths. This move, ran the company afoul of the Chrysler Corp. who was then using that name for their line of automobiles. Court action ensued, and Chrysler lost, and

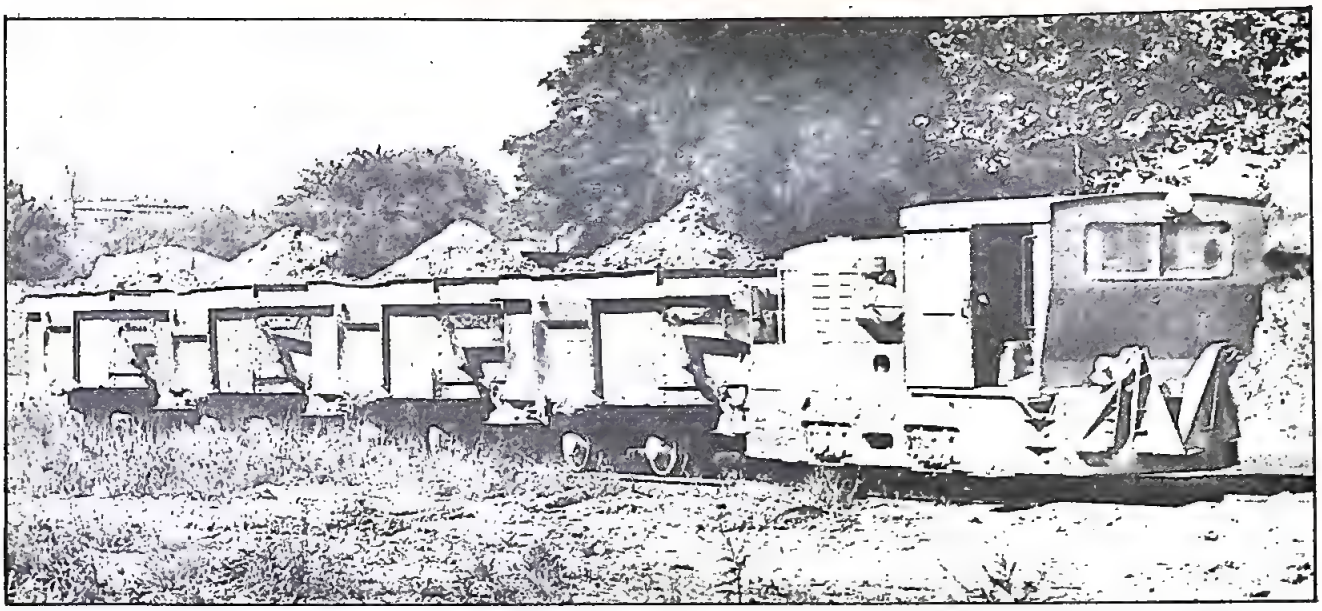
Though their products are small in size, this firm has survived while many larger firms have failed



Another early diesel, this one has lost much of the steam loco appearance of earlier Fate locomotives. Plymouth Collection.



This four-wheel "M" model operated at the Hancock, West Virginia plant of the Pennsylvania Glass Sand Company.



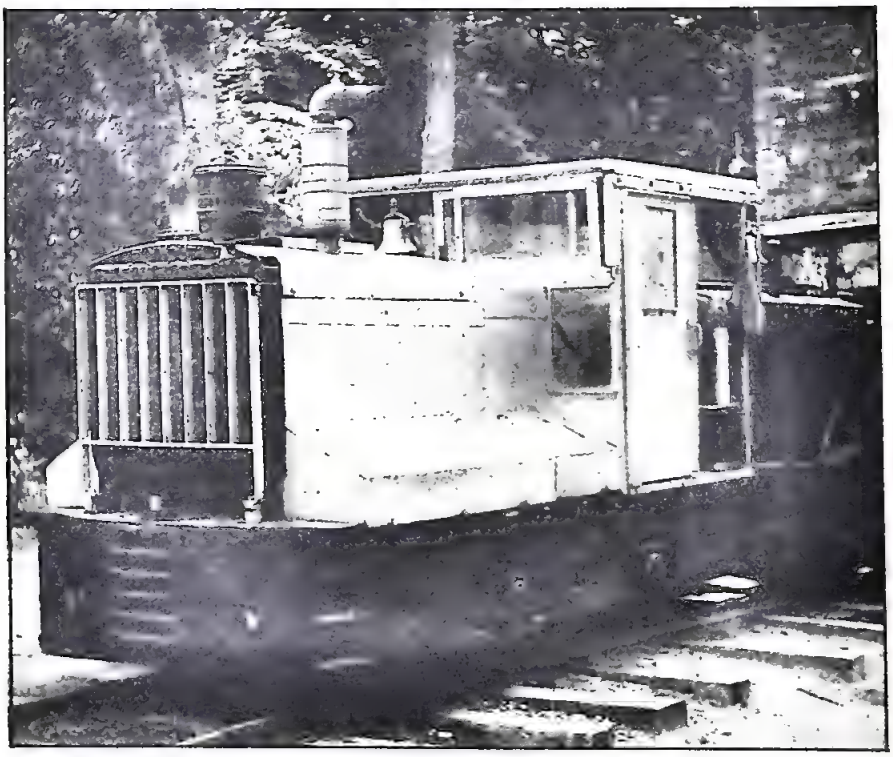
Built for special low clearance, this narrow gauge Plymouth hauled clay for the United Clay & Brick Company in Washington, D.C.

subsequently had to buy the right to the Plymouth name for their cars from Fate-Root-Heath. The name of the tractors was changed to Silver King and production continued into the 1950's. All the while the company continued turning out locomotives.

Today the company is a subsidiary of Banner Industries and still turns out brick and clay extruding equipment, locomotives, and fork lift trucks. The locomotives, however, make up a large portion of the company's production. A recent visit to the plant at Plymouth was both impressive and informative.

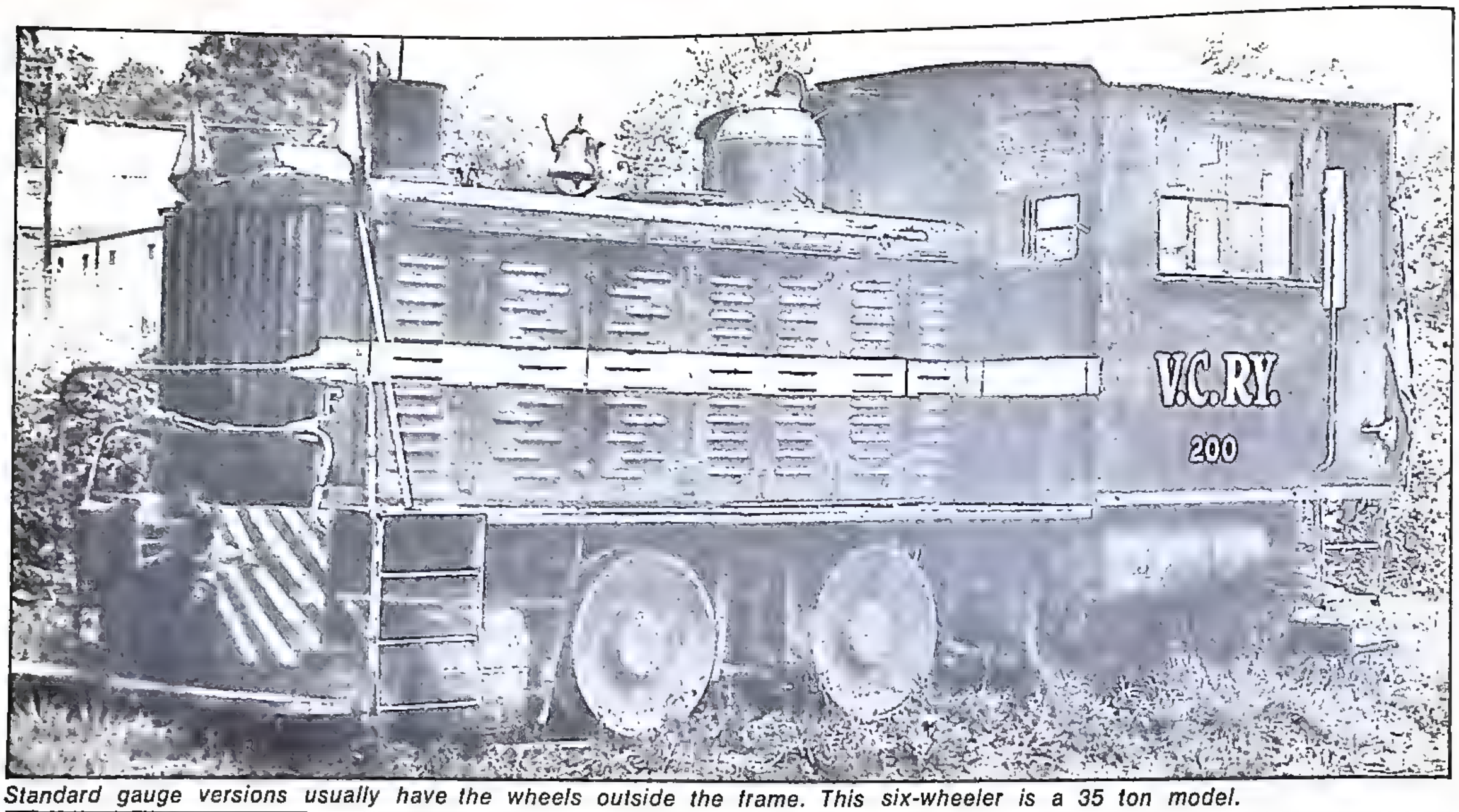
Arriving at the company offices, I was greeted by Mr. Miles Fate Christian, Director of Industrial Relations, who had generously consented to give me a guided tour of the facilities. The company covers several acres, and we began our tour in the old foundry, now used as a welding shop. As we watched the shop force fusing together the thick metal slabs that would form a new Plymouth Locomotive, I questioned Mr. Christian about the various aspects of the firm.

He told me that the company builds a line of both internal combustion and battery powered locomotives, the latter being for use in underground mining operations. The engines range in size from 3 to 120 tons and from 18 to 66 inches in gauge. The company offers a wide variety of designs of both endcab and centercab configuration. While several stock models are offered to the customer, the company is capable of building to special order and design. In fact, Mr. Christian stated that almost every order calls for special design to some degree.

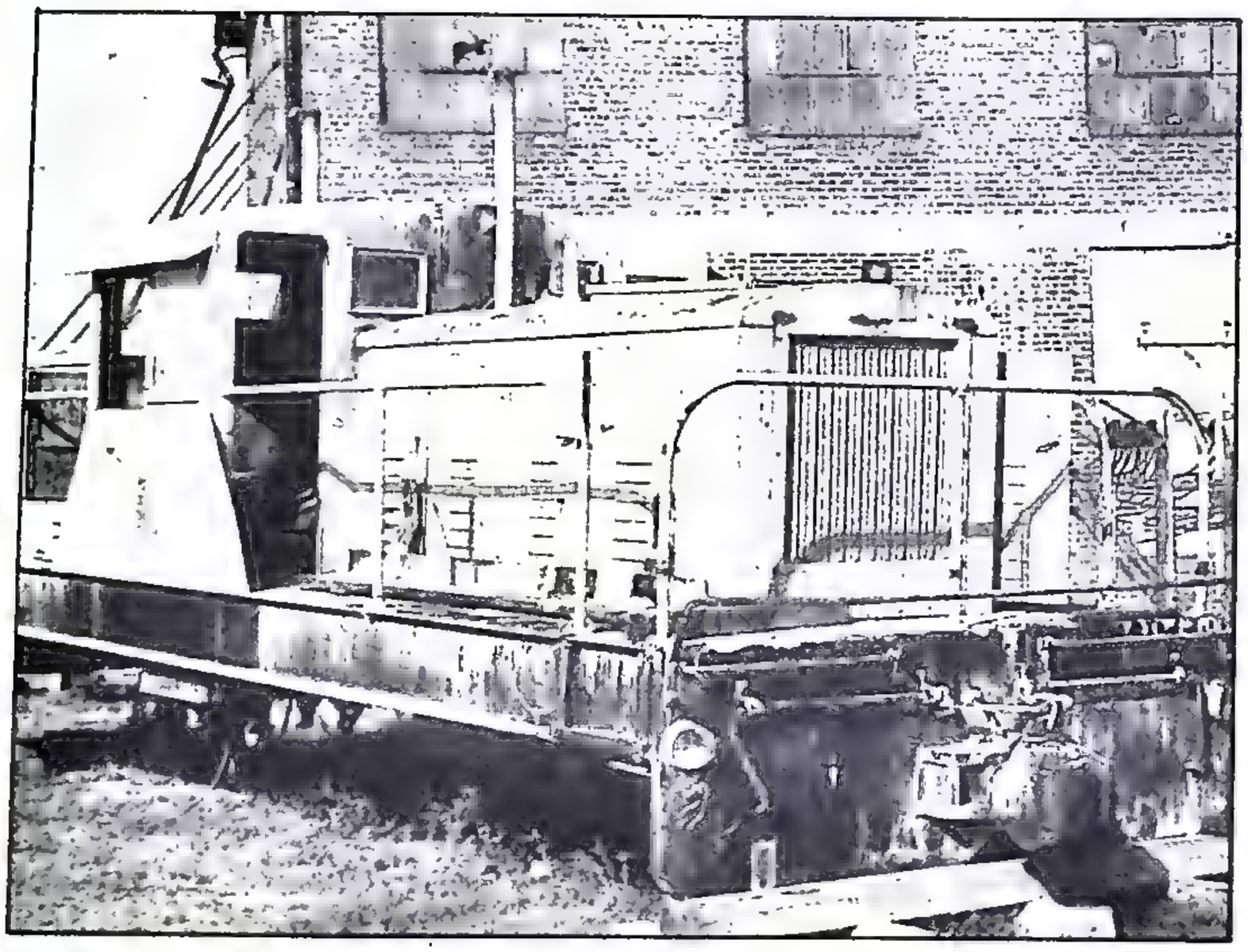


Even tourist railroads use Plymouths including the Pine Creek RR in Farmingdale, New Jersey. In fact, they have two of them!

Leaving the welding shop, we passed a rare DE Model, 50-ton Plymouth (only about 30 of this type ever built) sitting on blocks and awaiting rebuilding. Moving across the Chessie System tracks that bisect the plant area, we came upon three locomotives in the company yard. The first unit was a 20-ton model that currently serves as a shop switcher and "loaner." When



Standard gauge versions usually have the wheels outside the frame. This six-wheeler is a 35 ton model.



A fifty-ton, center cab loco awaits rebuilding outside the shops in Plymouth. The factory sells many reconditioned locomotives.

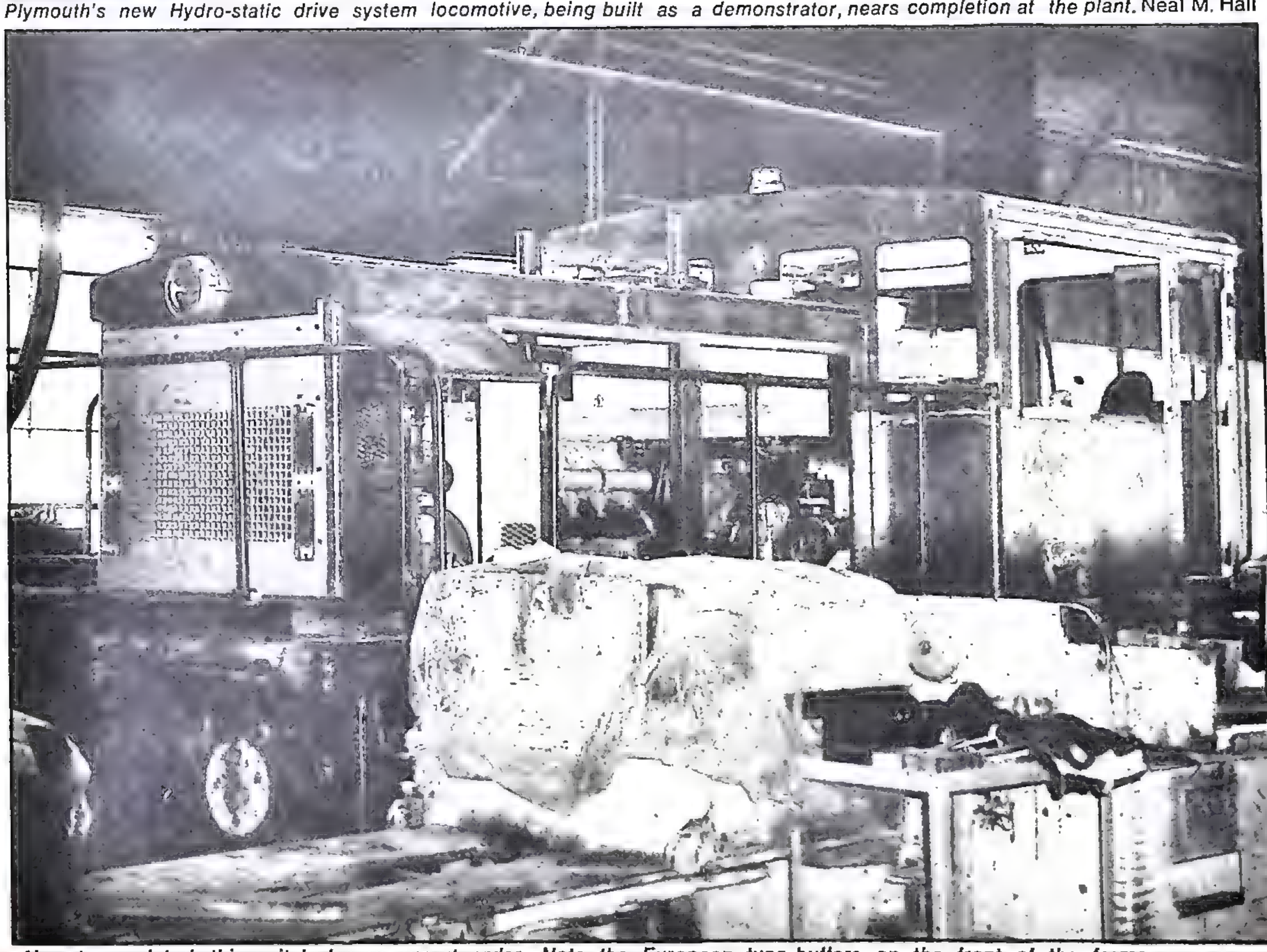
a customer sends his locomotive in for service this engine can be loaned to him during the servicing period. The unit is currently for sale, as another unit has been recently repurchased from the Westinghouse Corp. as a new shop switcher. This unit is a 4-wheel 10-ton DDT Model and sat on a track adjacent to the first locomotive.

To the rear of the yard, sat a 3-foot gauge, 4-wheel unit formerly owned by the Pennsylvania Glass Sand Co. It also has been repurchased from its former owner, but not for shop work or resale. The unit is the personal property of the President of Plymouth. Plans call for the engine and several cars to go to work on a private line on some country property owned by the president.

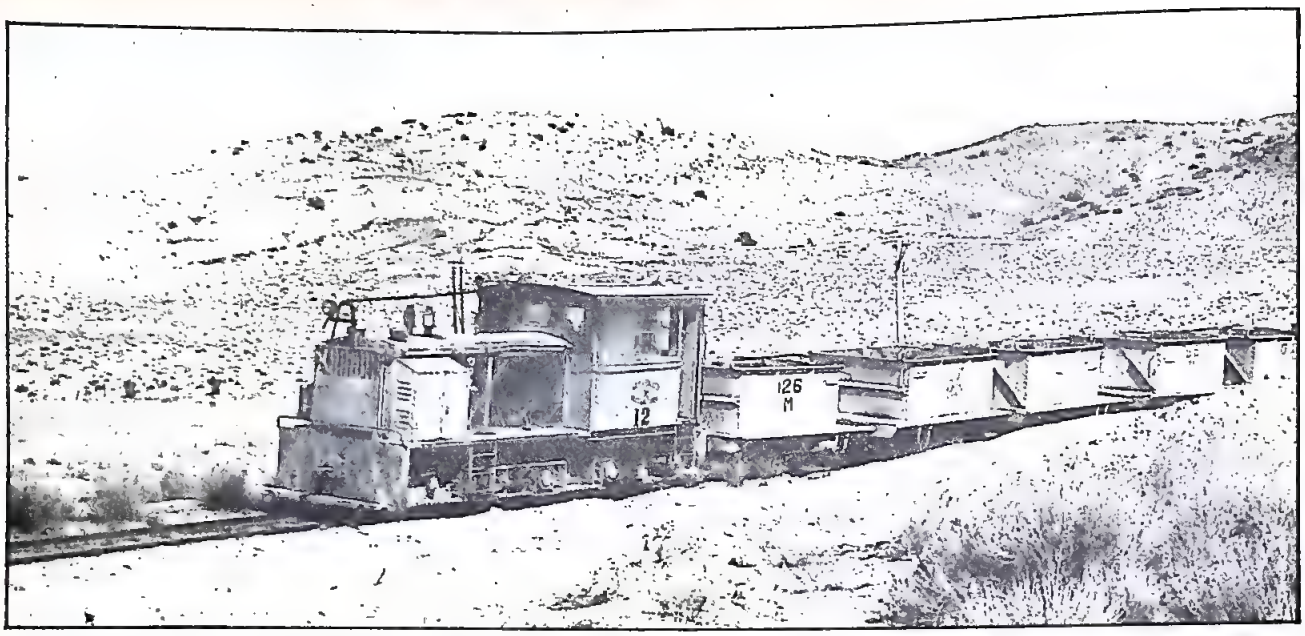
Leaving the yard we entered the paint shop and finishing area. Here we viewed a new 45-ton hydro-static diesel being built as a demonstrator. The locomotive features a drive system wherein the diesel engine powers a hydrostatic pump that in turn supplies power to hydraulic motors on the wheels. The system is much like the hydromatic transmission on an automobile. One major advantage of such a system is infinitely variable speed control within the speed range while the engine is under full or partial power.

On the other side of the shop a locomotive for export to Indonesia was nearing completion. Mr. Christian told me that a substantial portion of Plymouth's business is building for export. While he could give no set fig-

Plymouth's new Hydro-static drive system locomotive, being built as a demonstrator, nears completion at the plant. Neal M. Hall



Almost completed, this unit is for an export order. Note the European type buffers on the front of the frame.



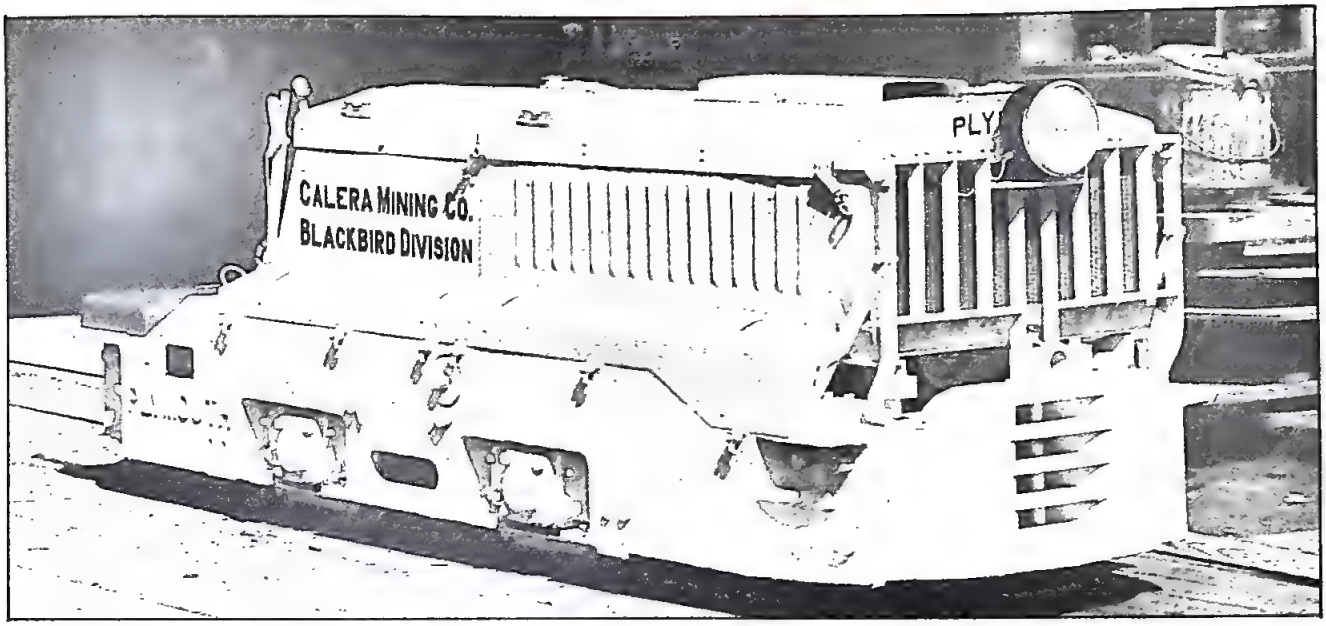
This narrow gauge loco once worked in the California desert, but now hauls tourists at the Magic Mountain amusement park. Geoff Auburn

ures of the number of units built per year for foreign and/or domestic use, he stated that the number varies widely due to the size of the units ordered. Shop space is limited and many small engines can be built in the same space it takes to erect one larger unit. Therefore, production numbers are wont to vary widely from month to month or year to year in proportion to the size of the locomotives sold.

The average time it takes to build a locomotive is from 90 to 120 days. Many of the locomotive components are built at the plant with the major exceptions being prime movers and torque converters. These are supplied by a variety of manufacturers. Currently, the Plymouths coming out of the erecting halls are powered by Detroit Diesel, Cummins, Caterpillar, and Deutz diesel engines, depending on the customer specifications.

Finally, I asked Mr. Christian why Plymouth had survived in the industrial locomotive business while other companies did not. He said that he felt it was because Plymouth was a custom-

This low slung 4-wheeler is the new factory shop switcher, having recently been repurchased from Westinghouse Corp. Neal M. Hall

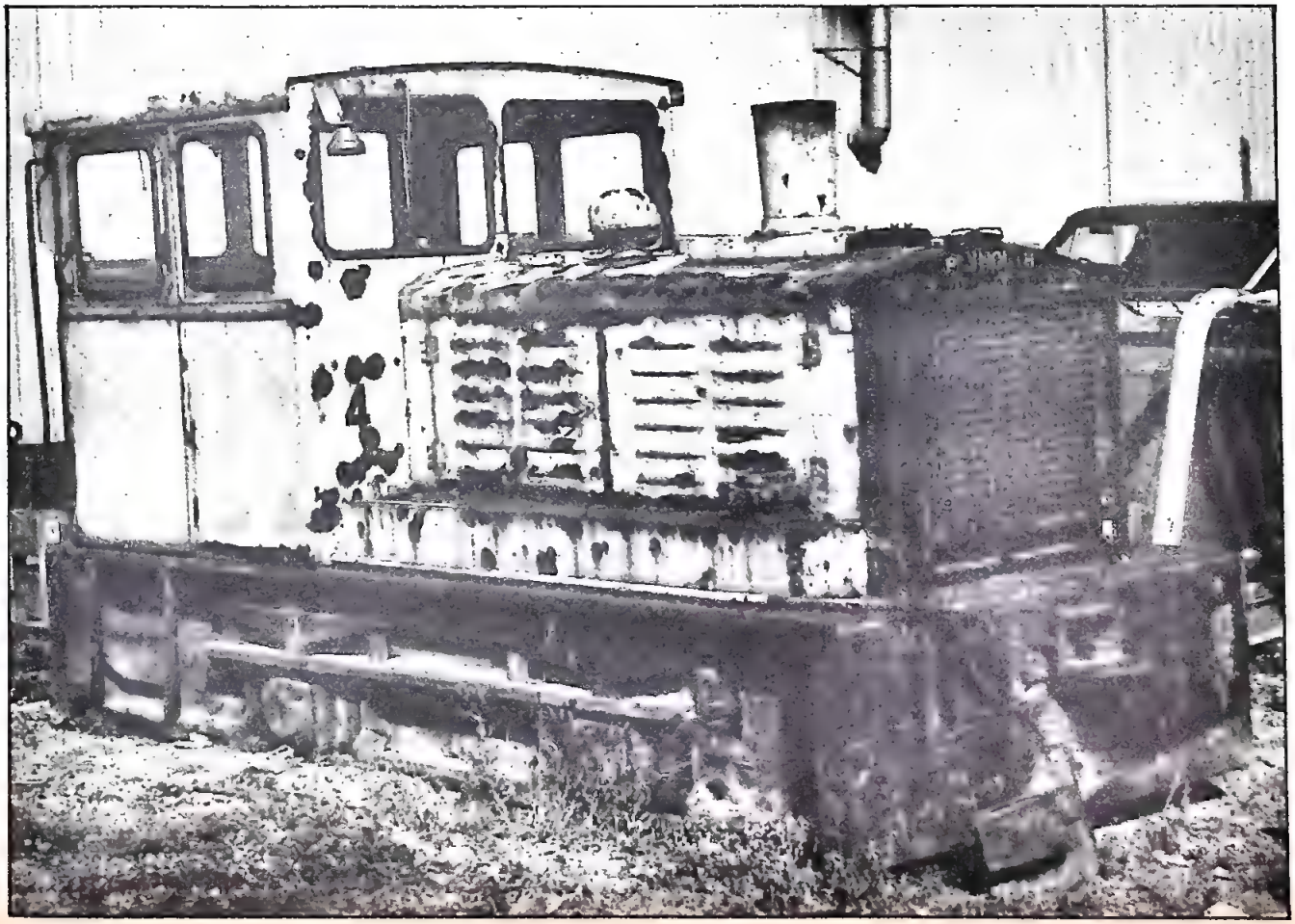


er oriented company and could build to specific customer needs. Other companies, no longer in the business, only offered a set of standard built models to customers.

Today, from Kansas City to Karachi or St. Paul to Sao Paulo, Plymouth Locomotives are hard at work, and living up to the reputation that makes the company the leading manufacturer of industrial locomotives.

Many of the locomotives are designed for mine operations, such as this cabless "FL" model. Plymouth Locomotive Works

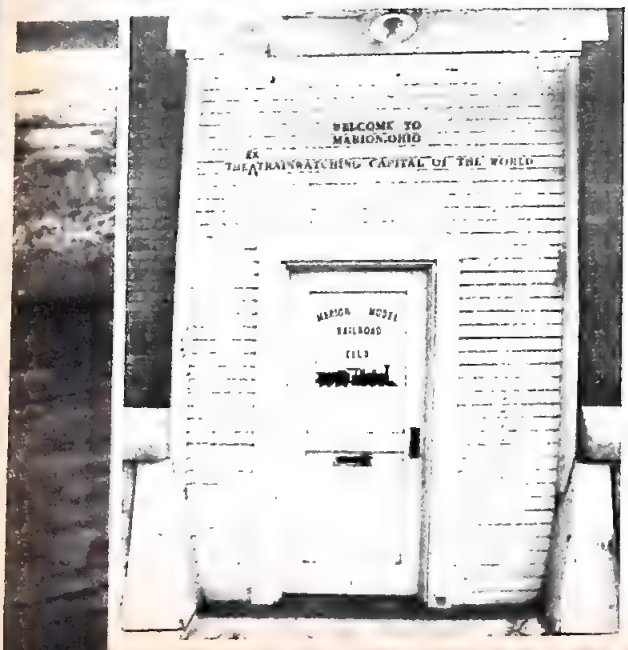
This 36-inch gauge loco is now the property of Plymouth's president, who plans to operate it on his own private railroad. Neal M. Hall



The ghosts of Erie-Lackawanna still hover over Marion, Ohio

By John Uckley

Photos by the author



The famous words modestly stenciled in black letters above the entrance to the Marion Model Railroad Club, located at Marion Union Depot, have changed in the last two years. The greeting to visiting railfans from various areas of North America now proclaims: "Welcome To Marion, Ohio. The Ex-Trainwatching Capital Of The World." It would be a hallmark of wisdom not to take this epitaph too seriously. The prefix "Ex," hyphened to the words, "Trainwatching Capital Of The World," is not appropriate, even in the year 1978.

Marion, geographically located in central Ohio, is still a stimulating place to experience the sights, sounds, smells and feelings of contemporary railroading. It is still possible to spend several hours in the vicinity of AC Tower and Marion Union Depot and witness a varied display of motive

THE HAUNTED CITY

It's just 1 p.m. on a quiet Sunday afternoon at Conrail's Marion engine terminal as an ex-Erie-Lackawanna GP-9 idles peacefully in the warm afternoon sunshine.

A Conrail GP9, still in Erie-Lackawanna dress, heads eastbound past the Marion Union Depot, built in 1902. This is a local working the fringes of town.

power and a moderate-to-heavy number of freight train movements. One can come away from the area feeling comfortable with the hard business compromises that are so much a part of railroading in the decade of the 1970's. If one totes a camera on his jaunts; Marion, Ohio, is certainly the place to expose several roles of your favorite films.

Marion, Ohio, then, is not "The Ex-Trainwatching Capital Of The World." If railfanning at Marion in the late 1970's has a fault, or an omission, it is most readily apparent in the absence of the physical presence of the beloved Erie-Lackawanna Railroad. This is the void in the railroad operations at Marion. It is true that occasional ex-Erie-Lackawanna diesel locomotives will make a spectral appearance in the City, but they are merely shells of their former selves. The colors and some faded corporate emblems remain, in some cases, to haunt sensitive railfans with bittersweet memories of times past.

The city of Marion, Ohio, could be aptly termed a haunted city. The recurring spirits of dead railroads, buried in a malaise of corporate failures, excess physical plants, and mergers, still materialize for all to see. The Erie-Lackawanna, Reading Lines, Penn Central, Jersey Central Lines, and Lehigh Valley color schemes still make fairly regular appearances at Marion on the ex-Penn Central "Big Four" Route and the ex-Erie-Lackawanna main line. The various General Electric units, the Alco Century units, the GP-9's, the EMD GP-30's, GP-40's, and SD-45's have an air of sadness about them.

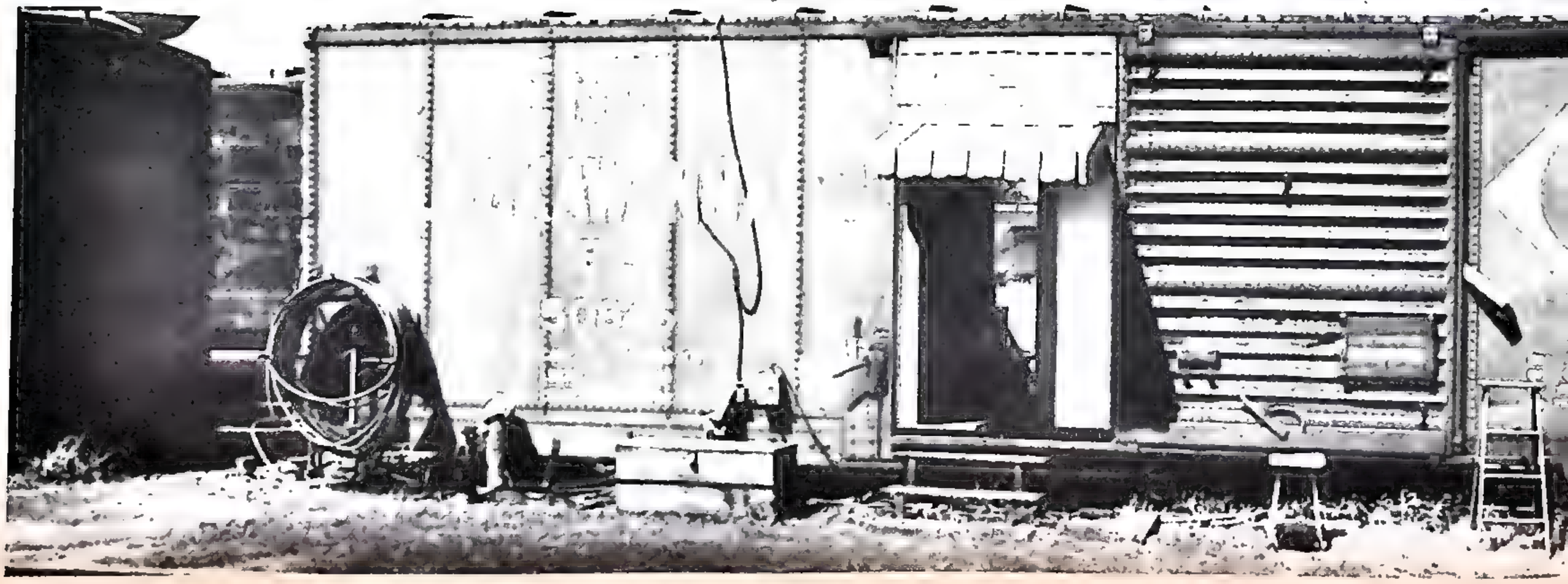
Of course, less ominous but nevertheless melancholy are the procession of Western Maryland units operating over various Chessie System lines, including the Toledo-Columbus main line that slices through Marion. The F7A's, F7B's, GP-9's, GP-35's, SD-

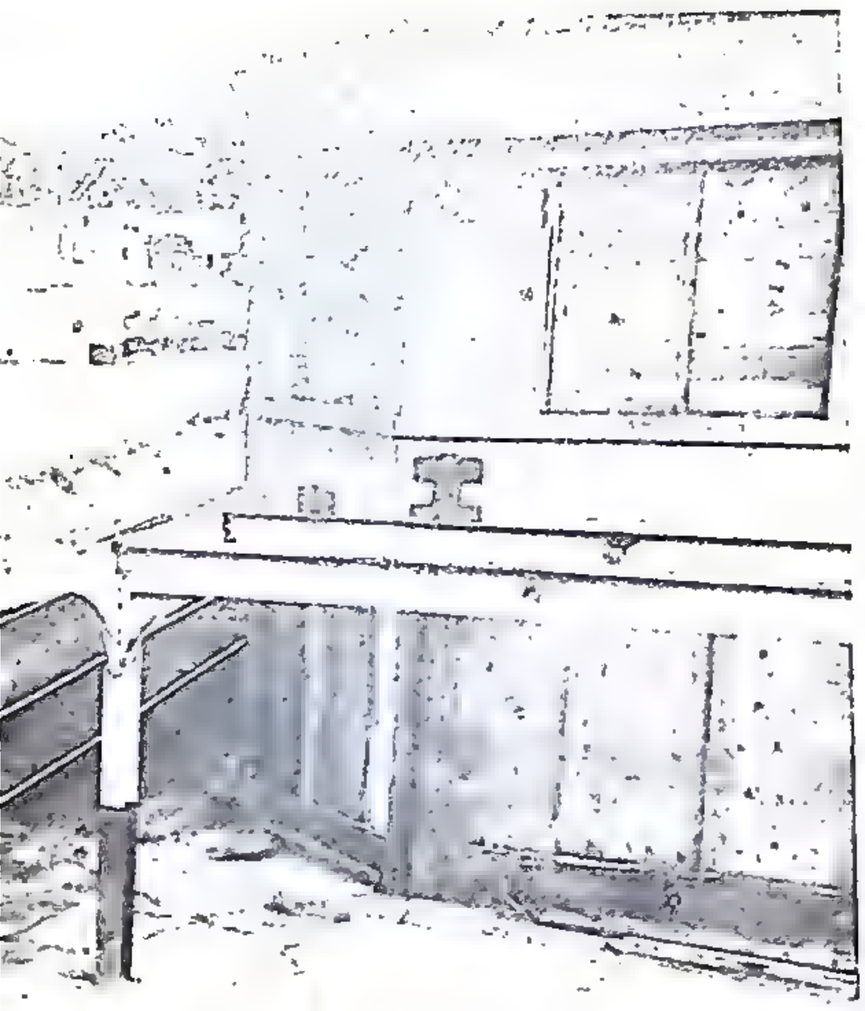
A special treat on August 6, 1978 was the sights and sounds of ex-Reading 4-8-4 #2101, clattering across the CR diamonds.

Western Maryland GP-40 No. 7549 gallops past Marion Union Depot with a northbound Chessie System coal

7478
7478
CR
7549
WM

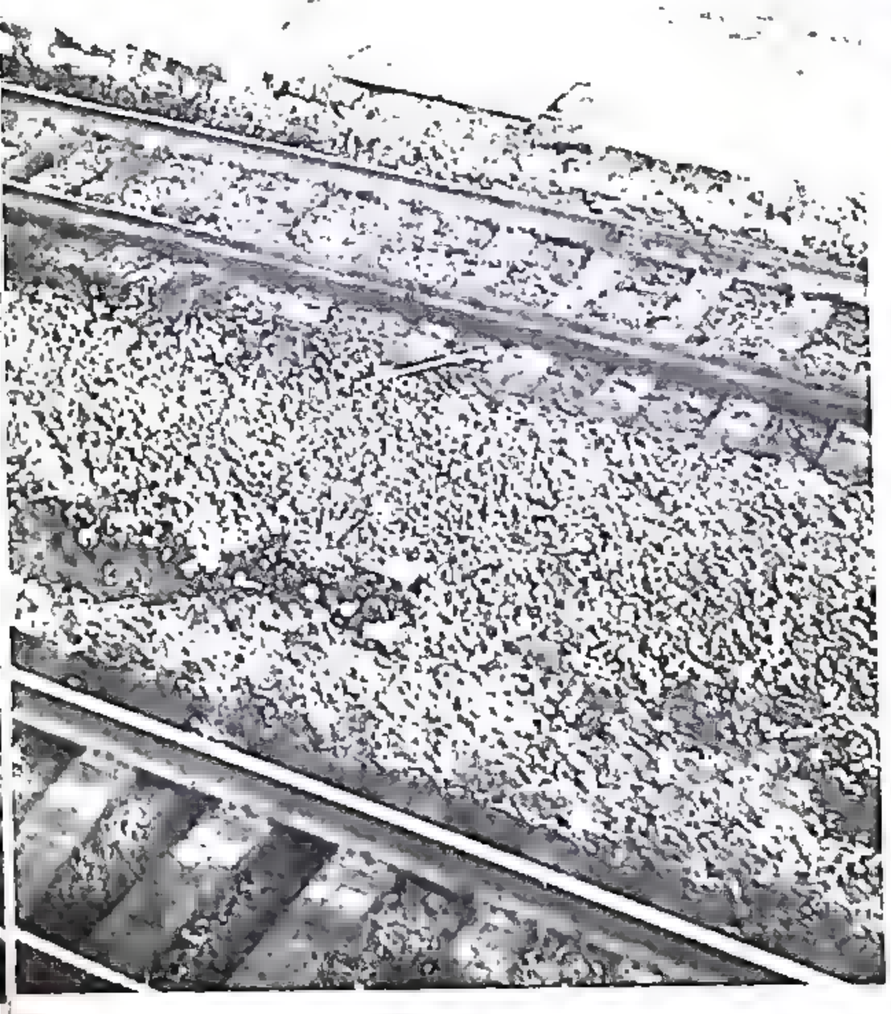
NW
8517
NW

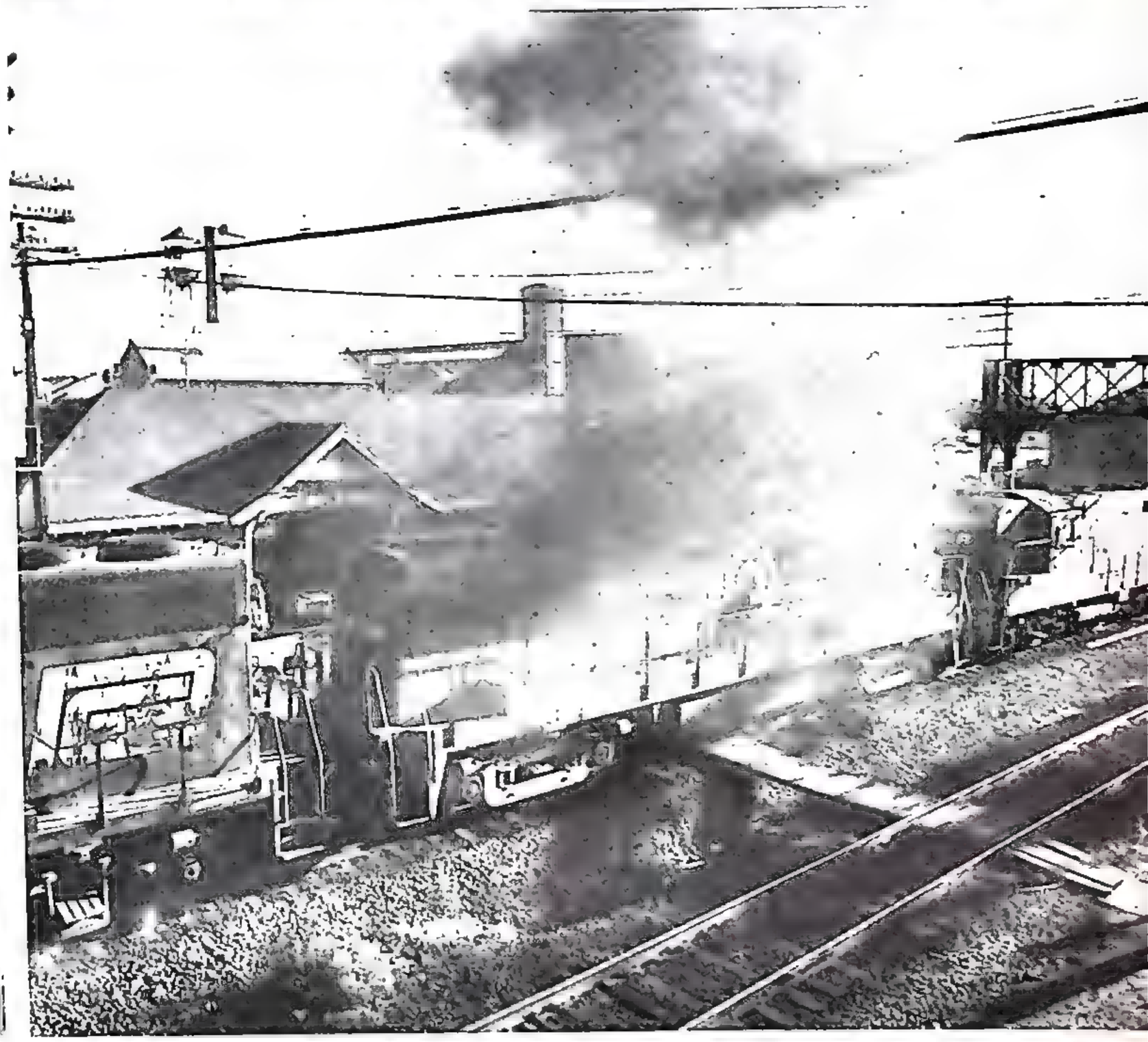




The Norfolk & Western operates through Marion on ex-Pennsylvania trackage, with the line coming south from Cleveland.

Conrail's Alco Centuries are a fairly common sight at Marion. The abandoned depot gives a silent welcome to the through freight.





As four units back slowly past the depot, Conrail GE U28B #2550 suddenly blows its stack and covers the whole area with black smoke.

"Hotel Marion," complete with brightly colored awning, serves as the office for the various crews that work out of Marion. "Ghosts" like this help to keep the memory of the E-L alive.

The Reading is represented, as this now-CR freight clicks across the NW crossing in the shadow of AC Tower.

A touch of nostalgia, albeit recent, as an ex-E-L diesel returns to its hometown on rails it once called its own, but now are in the hands of Conrail.

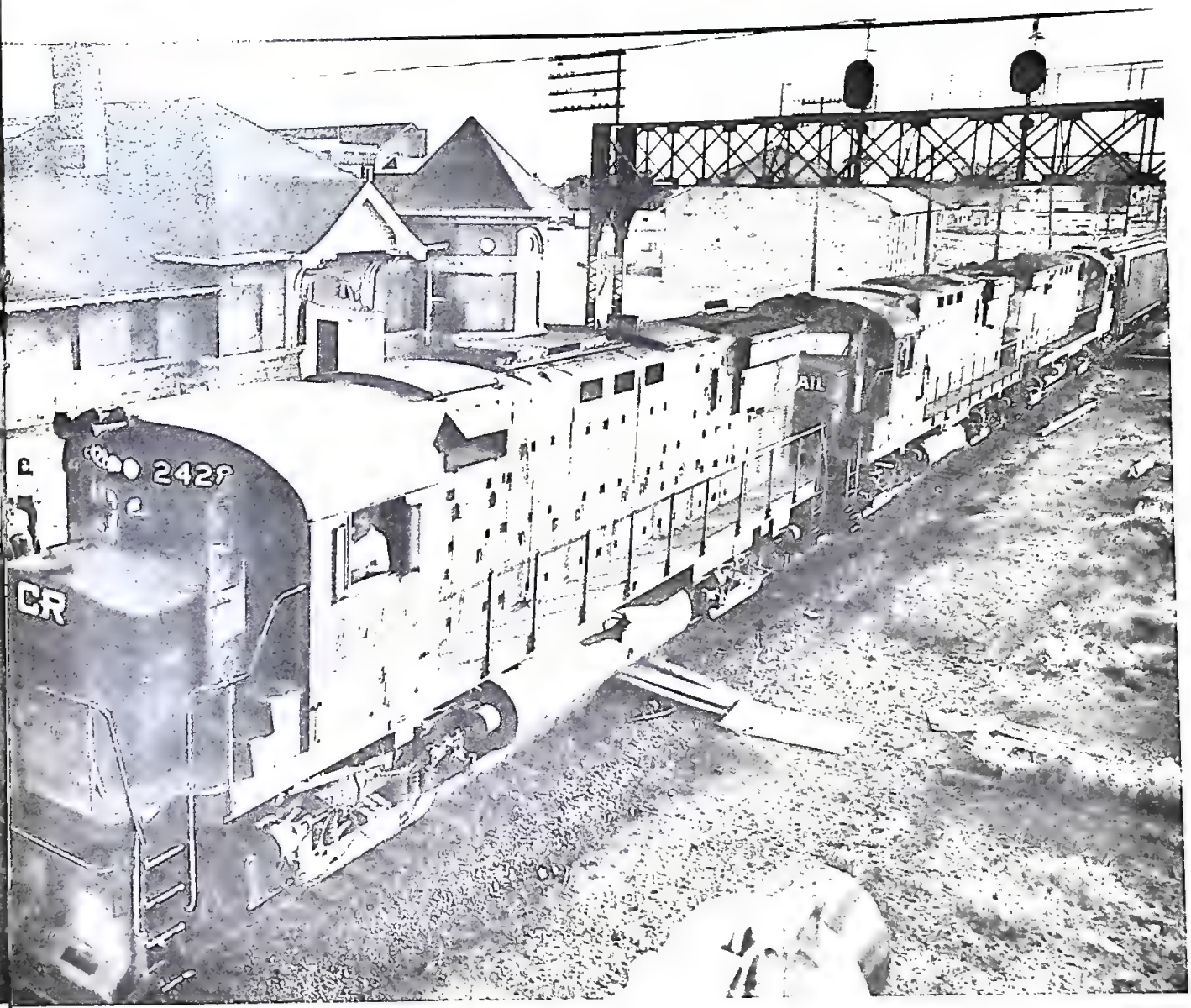
40's and other EMD road power are in a transitory state, hovering in the limbo between trade-in, or repainting to contemporary Chessie colors.

The Norfolk & Western Railroad at Marion has its traumatic days of corporate "swallow-ups" behind it. Most of us no longer brood over the fate of the Wabash Railroad, the Nickel Plate Road or the Virginian Railway. However, once in a while a spirit from the past will whisk through Marion on an N&W freight train to make us uncomfortable all over again. When some portions of the N&W paint scheme wear off, we are still left with a faded Wabash or a Nickel Plate Road name on certain diesel units.

The trek to Marion still bears fruit for railfans once you become accustomed to the city's altered railroad fortunes. There have been some physical changes in the area surrounding AC Tower and the abandoned shell of Marion Union Depot. The charming old railroad hotel that squatted adjacent to the N&W/Big Four/Erie-Lackawanna diamonds was demolished during the autumn of 1977. The metal platform coverings, installed in the early 1920's, that ran along the entire north side of the depot and the hotel for the protection of passengers against inclement weather, have been dismantled. Ex-Erie-Lackawanna yard activities have been condensed somewhat by Conrail with the closing of the diesel shops and some yard trackage. Portions of the ex-Erie-Lackawanna main line west of Marion, Ohio, have been parceled out to newly formed short line companies.

The absence of the bustling Erie-Lackawanna Railroad is the disconcerting vacuum that may prevent a railfan excursion to Marion from being 100 percent satisfying. Marion still throbs with vitality but its historical railroad perspectives have been altered forever by Conrail and whatever certainties the uncertain future may bring.

Three Century units roll under the signal bridge in early evening on an eastbound freight transfer run.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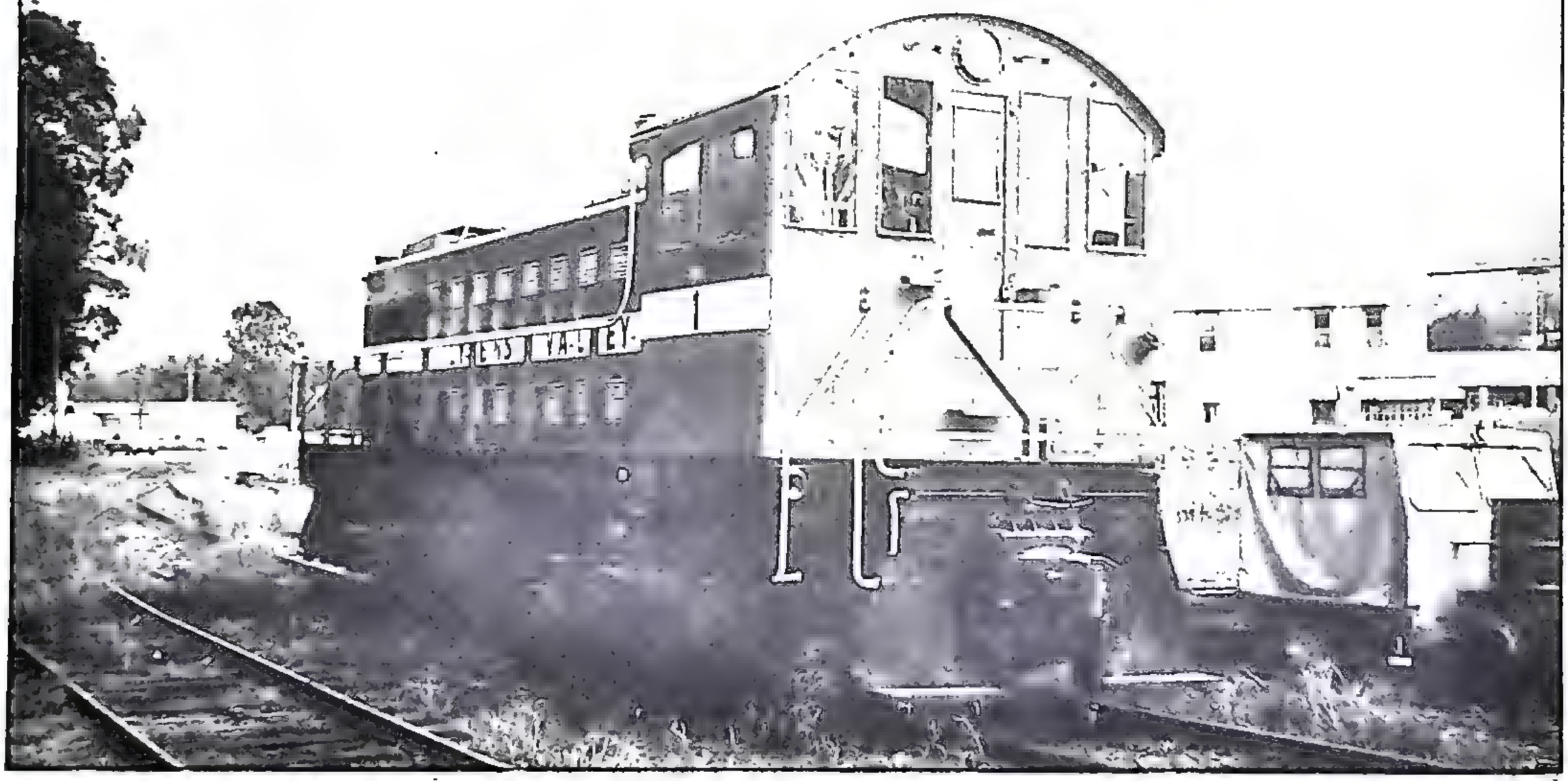
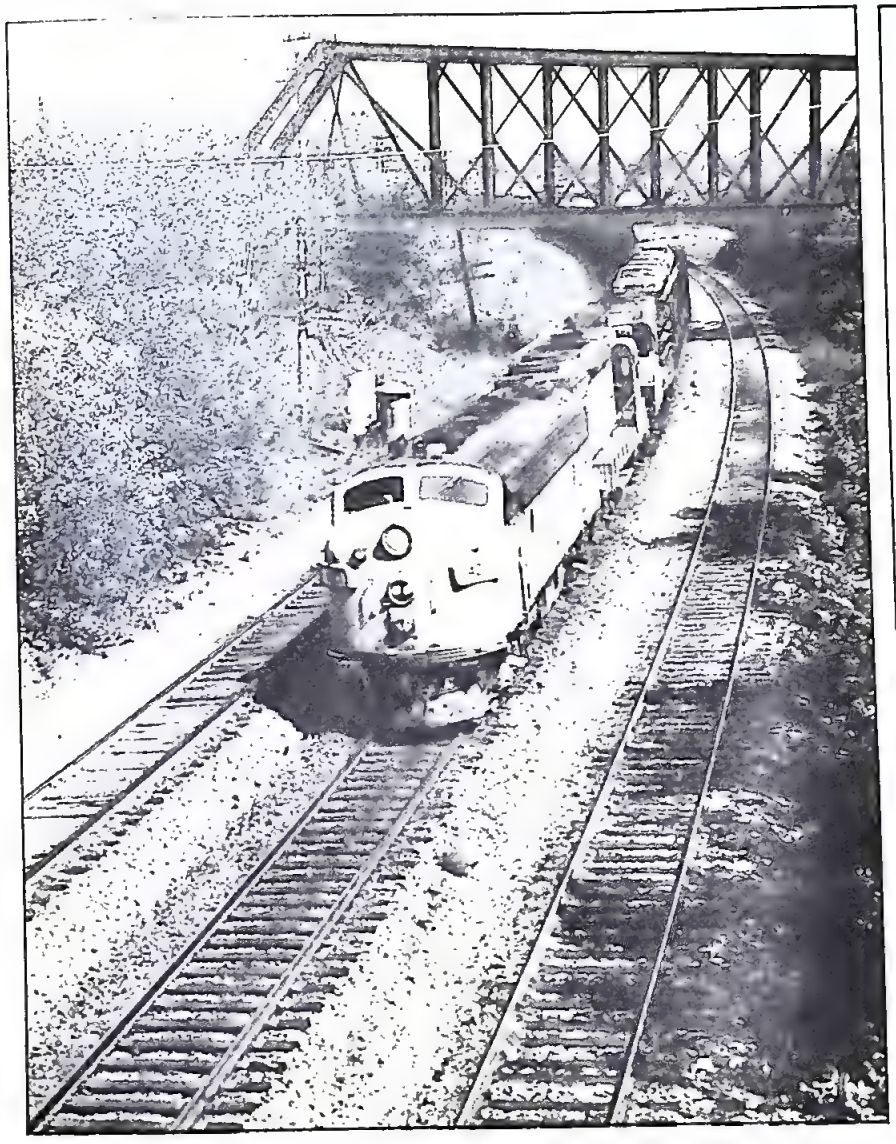


A bright red Alco switcher is the motive power of the newly formed Lykens Valley RR, another of those "designated operator" lines left over from the Conrail startup. The 15 mile line runs between Millersburg and Lykens, Pennsylvania, with a Conrail connection at Sunbury. Thomas G. Hughes Jr.

A newly delivered Missouri-Kansas-Texas SD40-2 basks in the sun at Parsons, Kansas in October, 1978. These Katy diesels are the first SD40-2s for the railroad, and, in fact, the first EMD six axle power the road has purchased. The units are bright green with yellow lettering and safety stripes. Jonathan Paul Jenter

New York's Metropolitan Transit Authority recently took delivery of a General Electric U34CH, almost identical to those used by New Jersey DOT. Normally this would have turned out to be a C34-7PH, but reports are the MTA wanted the locomotive to be interchangable with NJDOT's U34CHs. Loco is dark blue with a wide band in the center. Jerome A. Rosenfeld



Fire Levels Sierra Railway's Depot

An early morning fire on Thanksgiving Day, November 23, 1978, swept through the depot and museum of the Sierra Railway in Jamestown, California. This is the third time in 70 years that the office and depot has been destroyed by fire, the first time in 1910 and again in 1913.

A Sierra spokesman told us that the fire was the result of arson. It will not affect the rail operations of the tourist line, fortunately, but the loss of the museum is quite disheartening. Two passenger cars sitting next to the depot were slightly damaged, but the steam motive power and other historic equipment escaped damage.

Another road using Fs in abundance is the Chicago & Northwestern. The summer of 1978 saw a C&NW freight westbound for Chicago at Wheaton, Illinois, led by F #423 and two GP30s. Both Es and Fs are frequently seen in service. Edward J. Merzlock

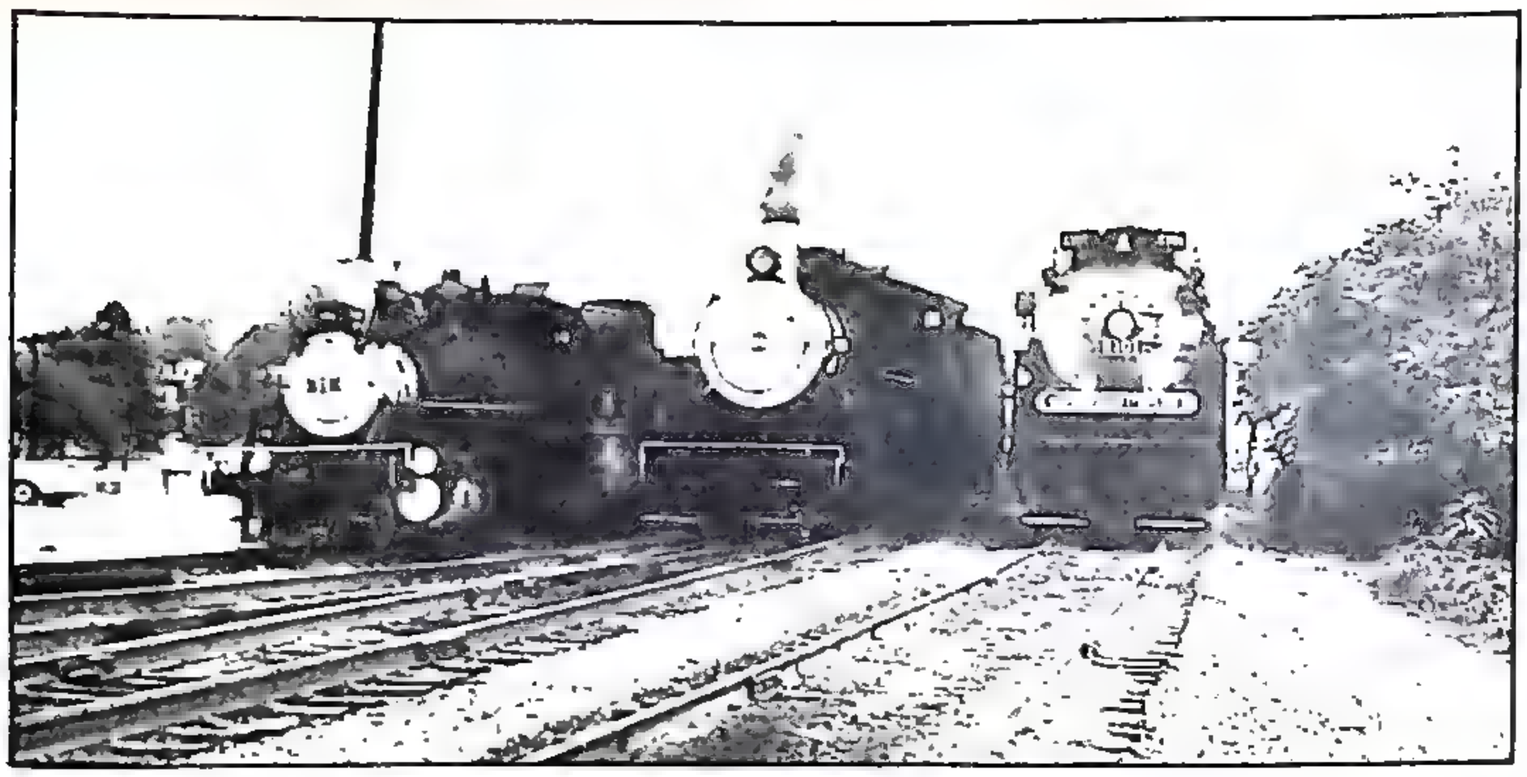
All of the Delaware & Hudson's six axle power has left the premises for delivery to the National Railway's of Mexico (NdeM). This includes the famed Alco PAs as well as the long string of Centuries seen here. The locomotives will operate in Mexico in D&H blue, but with new lettering. Frank S. Novak

A dieselboose? Call it what you will, Seaboard Coast Line recently took delivery of the first of 10 General Electric BQ-23-7 diesels. The strange looking cab is equipped with live seats, and a caboose type desk on the fireman's side of the cab. The idea behind this new cab configuration is to eliminate the need for a caboose, as the entire crew can ride in the locomotive. Warren G. Opalk

The first five of a total order of 13 F40PH locomotives has arrived on the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. These brightly painted EMD units will operate on the Framingham and Providence commuter lines, part of the MBTA service which is operated by the Boston & Maine. Jay B. Shumaker

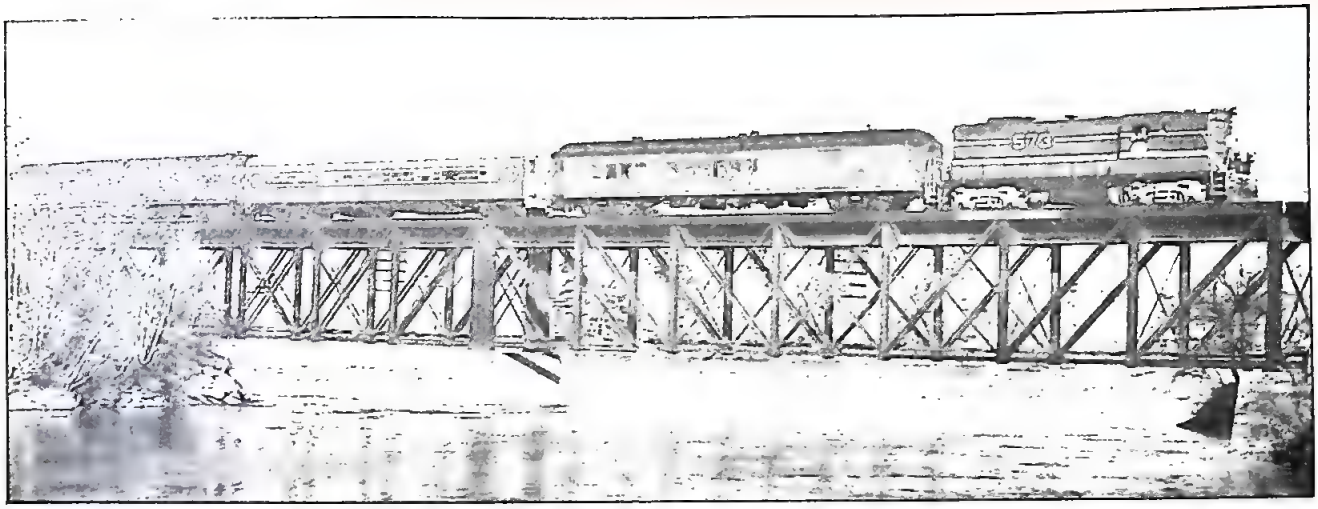
Good news for F lovers, as F7 #2201 has been rebuilt and returned to service on the Sonora-Baja California RR in Mexico. There are two other active Fs in service on the SBC, working as switch engines at Benjamin Hill and Mexicali. It is reported that F7 #2202 may also go into the shop for rebuilding, as well as two ex-Northern Pacific FTs. Chris Skow

And bad news for F followers as a passenger era closes. On September 25, Illinois Central Gulf's (ex-GM&O) commuter train between Joliet and Chicago made its last run with the GM&O F and red passenger cars. The train is now operated with an F40PH and three RTA bi-level coaches. Frank S. Novak



The Chessie Steam Special's 4-8-4 made appearances recently with the steam power of two different tourist operations. In the upper photo the Gettysburg Railroad's two steamers, #38 and 76, pose with the ex-Reading Class T-1 at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania on October 1, 1978. Bob Baker. *The Allegheny Central's two ex-Canadian Pacific 4-6-2s, #1238 and #1286, were headed north while meeting the #2101 headed south at Covington, Virginia. The AC locomotives were on a special run by the National Railway & Historical Society.* George Clinebell

Burlington Northern #5555 is one of a group of new General Electric C-30-7s to go into service in Cascade Green. The locomotive was built in October 1978 and released from Erie, Pennsylvania on October 6, 1978. The unit is seen on its initial run west at Ashland, Nebraska, along with locos #5545 and #5547. Mark W. Heinz



The first passenger extra on the Maine Central in four years was this Director's Special, rolling across the Adroscoggin River at Lewiston, Maine in October 1978. Included in the consist was MEC's last steam boiler GP7, in green and gold, with combine, ex-Amtrak coach and business car #333. Ronald N. Johnson

Union Pacific has been adding power to Amtrak's SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR between Cheyenne and Ogden in the way of bright yellow E9s such as #51 seen here. Other UP power helping in this service are some SD40-2s which have been regeared for high speed service. And as if to try to keep pace, the Southern Pacific added their bicentennial decorated #3197 to the eastbound ZEPHYR on September 3, 1978. Dave Seidel

Ex-Norfolk & Western Alco C-425s are used, one at each end, to move the coal trains on the Navajo Mine Railroad in New Mexico. The trains average only eight to ten cars, and at the present time they have a total of 27 cars in use between the power plant and the mine. Units are dark blue with a bold white and red stripe and a red nose. Kenneth M. Ardinger

PHOTO GALLERY

We welcome your submissions for possible use in PHOTO GALLERY. Both black & white prints and color slides will be considered. $5.00 or more will be paid for each photo used. Send to Gallery, Rail Classics, 7950 Deering Ave., Canoga Park, CA 91304.

All four Alco PAs of the D&H pull local freight along Lake Champlain south of Port Henry, New York on May 7, 1977. Jim Shaughnessy

The Limited Express "Hatsukari #1" of Japanese National Railways enters Misawa City, Japan in August, 1978 with series-783 multiple unit equipment. William T. Morgan

Biddle to Wheatley Turn arrives at Biddle yards, Little Rock, Arkansas with three cars of fresh-cut ties. John Martin

Heading for Toronto at 60 mph is Canadian National number 6060 crossing the Jordan River, Ontario in September, 1977. Ronald Johnson

New Haven motors operate on the old New York Connecting Railroad through Woodside, Queens on a route now included in Conrail. Stephen Benkovitz

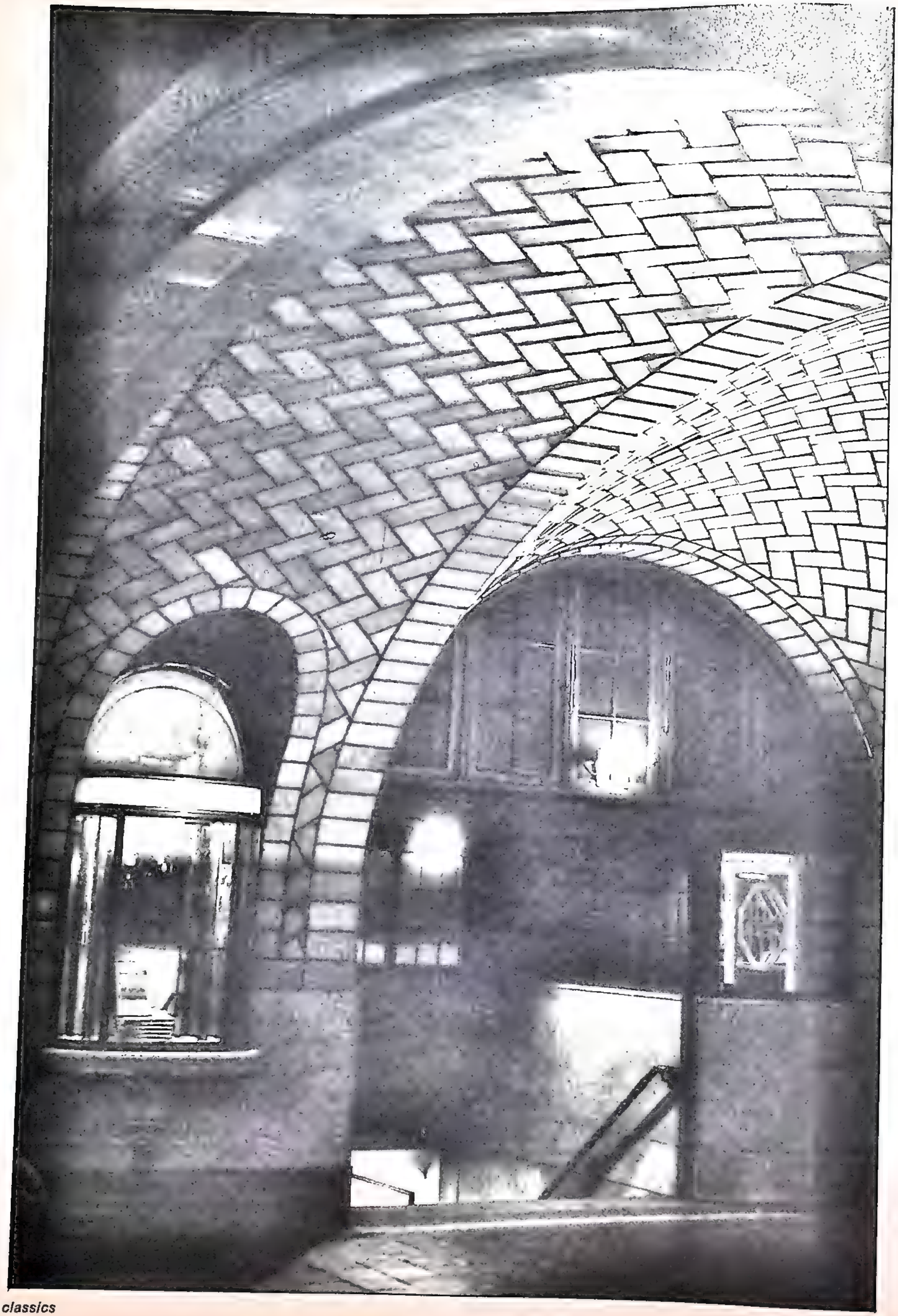
A westbound Santa Fe freight highballs across the Vermillion River just south of Streator, Illinois in May, 1977.
David Franzen

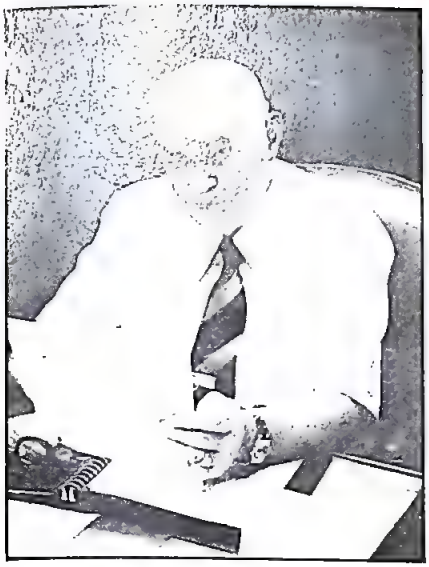
(Following page)
Two Union Pacific Centennial diesels, #6939 and #6912 lead a westbound freight into Albion Yard in Portland, Oregon on July 29th, 1978.
Kenneth M. Ardinger

During the bicentennial year this train connected with RDG train from Philadelphia for direct service to New Hope. Copper Range No. 100 pulls ex-RDG multiple unit coach. Howard Bedwell, Jr.

Poor visibility makes this FA1 not the best choice as a switcher, but here it is at Cranford, New Jersey setting out cars for the Staten Island Rapid Transit in 1963. Don Wallworth

Prior to last run of shovelnose diesel No. 9908, SILVER CHARGER, on April 27, 1963, Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad train No. 1 sits in the darkness of Carr Street Yard at St. Louis, Missouri. Jim Wozniczka





Photos by Margaret Joskow

THE STATION MASTER

By Jean Melford

Keeping Grand Central Terminal running keeps E. V. Quinn quite busy . . . and happy

Like his father and his father's father, E. V. Quinn is a railroad man. He was just 18 when he began working for the railroad in 1935 as a ticket agent, and by the time he was 44 years old in 1960, he was appointed the sixth station master of Grand Central Terminal.

Today at 61, Quinn is a pleasant man with a large smiling face and a laurel wreath of white hair. His blue eyes sparkle, especially when he talks about his favorite subject—the railroad. Yet in his dark, conservative suit and subdued tie, Quinn does not resemble his stereotype. No striped overalls or red bandana marks his trade. The only clue to his profession is his tie clip, a small duplication of a modern locomotive.

Quinn said it was "just natural" to follow in the footsteps of his father, a train dispatcher, and his grandfather, a conductor. Even his three younger brothers are railroad men, as are his nephews. Only his son, after one year of service with the railroad, decided to become a policeman with the Westchester County Parks Department.

Quinn believes his first taste of the railroad came through stories his grandmother told him as a young child. Later, when Quinn became a little older, he, like other children, loved to play by the railroad tracks. He found that large copper pennies could be made from small ones by placing them on the tracks of an oncoming train. Doll scissors could be made in a similar way by criss-crossing two pins. And nothing could be a more thrilling sight for a child than to see a locomotive racing down the tracks with a full head of steam.

But Quinn's favorite activity was going to work with his father at Grand Central Terminal. Quinn enjoyed the train ride to the station from his home in Riverdale. He also enjoyed associating with his father and his father's co-workers. But most of all, Quinn enjoyed just being in the terminal and watching all the people hasten to their various destinations.

Even after fifty years of working and playing in the station, Quinn has not lost his taste for the station's hectic atmosphere. At lunch and when the office is quiet for a moment or two, Quinn loves to watch the flow of human traffic.

"A quarter to nine is my favorite time; that's the time we reach the peak of the rush hour," he explains. "It's nothing but solid humanity from the tracks to the Pan Am escalator. You can't even put your finger between two people."

Quinn spends most of his time in his paneled, but not plush, office near the waiting room. On his desk there are three telephones: one red, one blue, and one green. These phones are hotlines to the various dispatchers' offices as well as to Conrail and the Pentagon. The walls of his office are covered with maps of the station and pin-up calendars of trains. Yet juxtaposed among these pictures of trains hang three paintings of schooners. Why schooners in the station master's office? "I get sick of looking at trains all the time," snaps Quinn.

Being station master is a busy job. Quinn is responsible for everything from sorting mail to taking care of emergencies. "No two days, two hours, or even two minutes are alike," he declares.

As the station master works, announcements from the PA system and various radio receivers tuned to the dispatchers' offices and the terminal's police fill the room with a sense of urgency. Quinn likes to keep the door to his office shut while he works, but the door is never closed for long. His secretary brings in more and more paperwork. His assistants breeze in and out for advice. An MTA official stalks across the washed-out purple carpet of the room to inform Quinn of a leak on the upper ramp. Quinn tells the official he has already been working on it.

Yet not all of Quinn's emergencies are as mundane as leaky pipes. Late one night, while Quinn was sound asleep, he was awakened by an hys-

40 TRACK

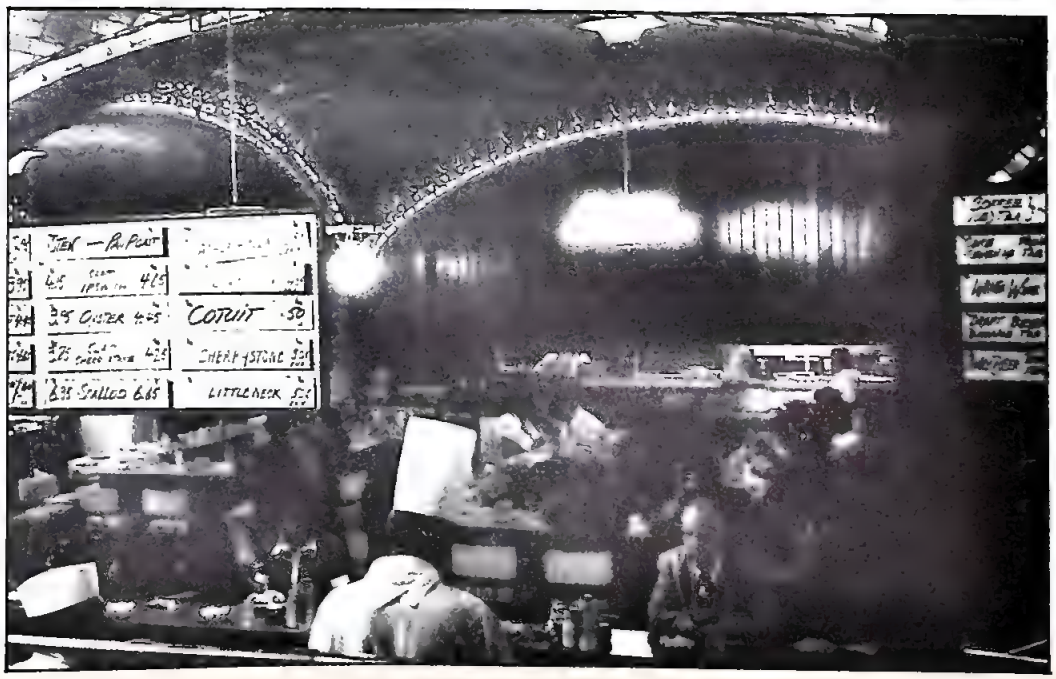
terical telephone call from a worker in the baggage department. The worker had accidentally dropped a shipment of bees in the station, and like the spirits from Pandora's box, the bees had eagerly flown to all corners of the station. Quinn, now wide awake from the news, immediately called the owner of the shipment, who advised him to get a queen bee. "Where the heck do I get a queen bee," barked Quinn over the phone, "especially at this time at night?" Luckily, the owner knew some beekeepers in the vicinity and called them for help. Within hours most of the bees were clustered around their queen, and the keepers were able to repack the bees into a surrogate hive just minutes before the first train arrived. Quinn had saved his passengers from a stinging welcome.

But perhaps one of Quinn's most frequent functions is to deal with passengers who have been inconvenienced by delayed trains. Quinn tends to sympathize with these commuters because, "No one comes in here with an unjustified complaint." Quinn says the average commuter takes aggravation in stride and accepts delaps as an occupational hazard. But to help those late commuters who have to deal with angry bosses, Quinn has devised an official late slip that certifies what time the train pulled into the station. However, Quinn happily points out that there haven't been as many delays and breakdowns in the system since the old trains were replaced by new and better ones.

Although the new trains make for better time and riding, Quinn admits that he still longs for the days of one of the most famous trains, the *Twentieth Century*. He likes to recall how the red carpet would be rolled out for passengers to board the train, and how the necessary tickets, often a yard long, would be collected ahead of boarding so passengers would not be disturbed en route. Ladies were given corsages, and barbers were available for the men on the train. There were valets and even a stenographer on board for the bigwigs.

Many movie stars routinely traveled on the *Twentieth Century,* according to Quinn, because they found it a pleasant and relaxing way to travel. Often Quinn would allow celebrities to wait in his office and board the train at the last possible moment to avoid the press and crowds. And it was not uncommon to have Vanderbuilt or Morgan hook his own parlour car up to the train.

"In those days there was real competition among the railroads," said Quinn. "Everyone was giving it his all to make his company and train the best. The only complaint about the railroad was typified in a commercial slogan comparing the passenger train's route to that of the freight train's: 'A pig can go from Coast to Coast without changing trains, but you can't.' "



Steam returns to the cotton fields thanks to the Scott & Bearskin Lake Railway

SMOKE ACROSS THE PLANTATION

By Clifton E. Hull

Black, oily smoke oozed out the locomotive stack, settled gently to the ground, and slowly drifted away across the seemingly endless rows of a cotton field. The southern sun had not long been above the horizon, yet the dancing heat waves soon absorbed the fading smoky haze.

Young bolls of cotton were just beginning to open, exposing the fluffy white fibers which have been synonymous with Dixie for a hundred years. Late opening whitish-gold blossoms were drinking in the life-giving rays of the sun.

This was not the long-gone days of the old South, but in late August of 1978. A weekend of steam railroading was about to begin on the Scott & Bearskin Lake Railway. The road extends nearly 1.5 miles across the Robert L. Dortch Plantation, about 10 miles southeast of North Little Rock, Arkansas.

The area is a natural site for a railroad.

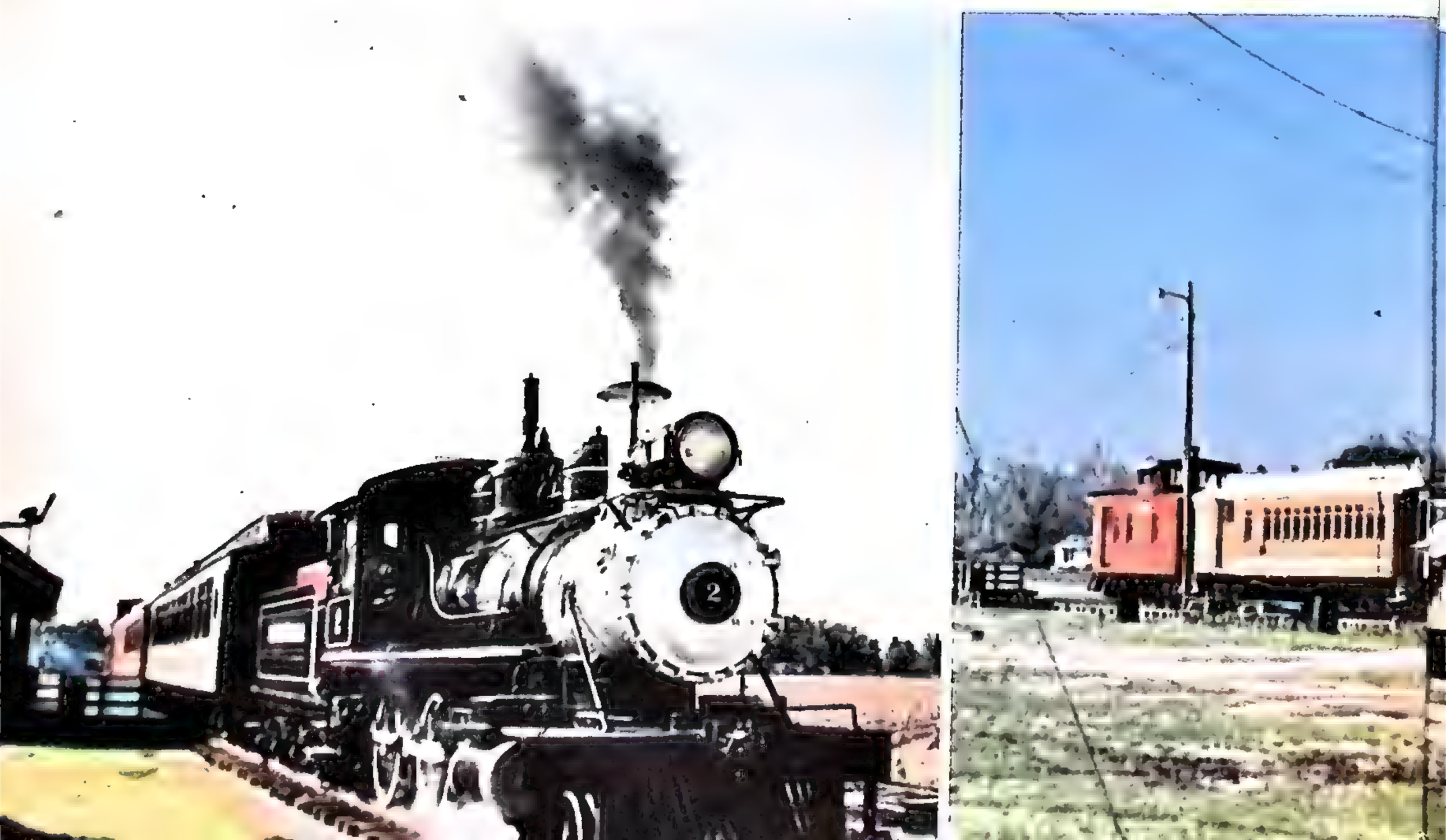
In about 1854 one of the Dortch family ancestors was greatly impressed with the evident fertility of the rich, dark, river bottom land, and made his homestead here. Through the passing years, the family legacy has grown to several thousand acres, widely known for the production of premium seed for soy beans and cotton.

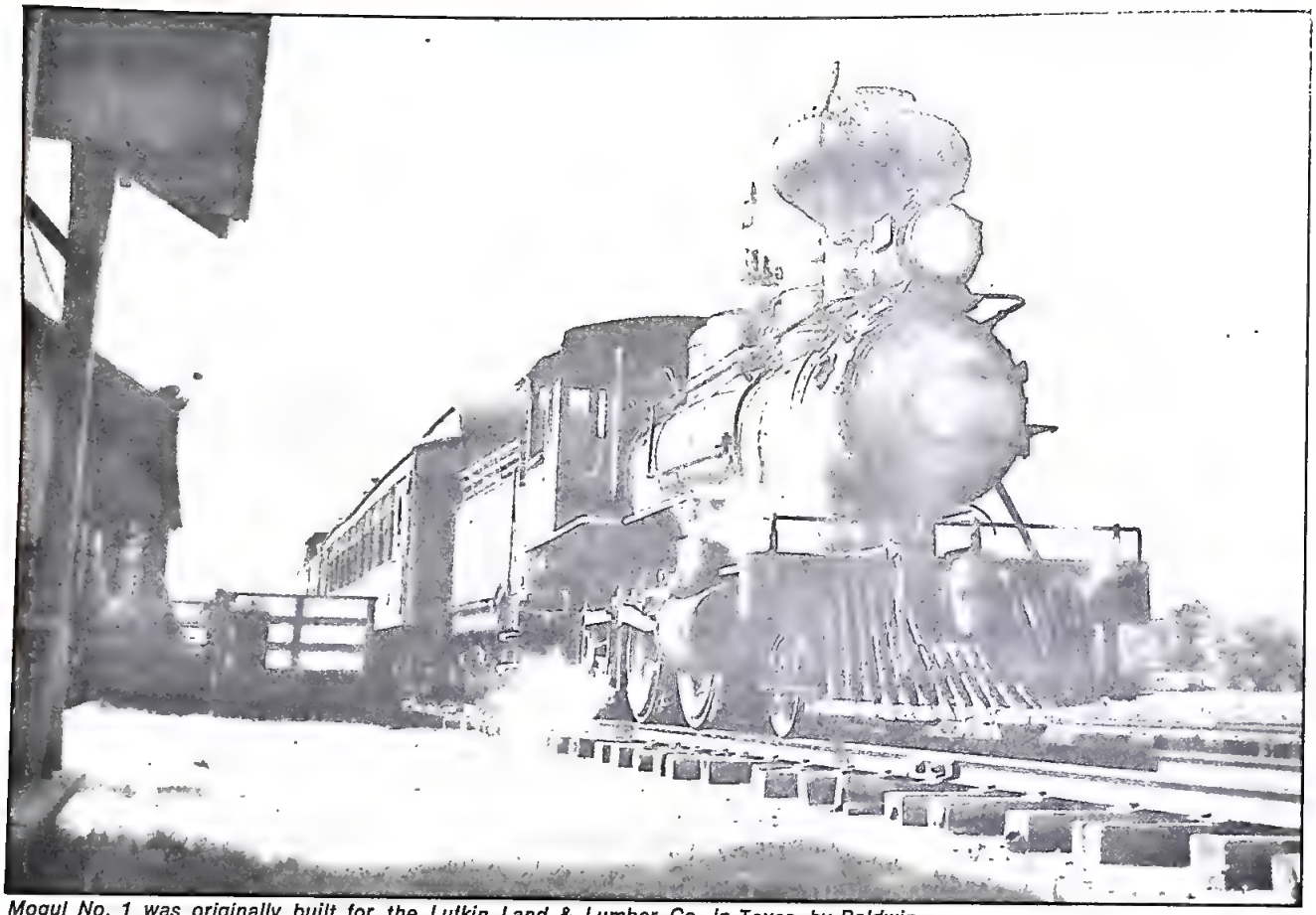
Robert L. Dortch, Sr., the epitome of a Southern plantation gentleman, was doggedly determined that the ways of life on the plantations must not disappear and be forgotten. At the junction of State Highways 130 and 161, which cut across the plantation, was the little settlement of Scott. The rails of the St. Louis-Southwestern (Cotton Belt), served the town on their way between North Little Rock and Pine Bluff to the south about 50 miles. Beside the track was a fine brick general merchandise store, which had served the community for many years. As the regional supermarkets grew, trade at the old store was decreasing.

Robert Dortch discontinued the general merchandise store, cleaned out the stock, and gradually began filling the large old building with every manner of plantation-life artifacts. Scouting far and wide, he rescued every tool and bit of memorabilia he could find. From old photographs to huge steam-powered tractors, he brought them home, and the Plantation Museum was born.

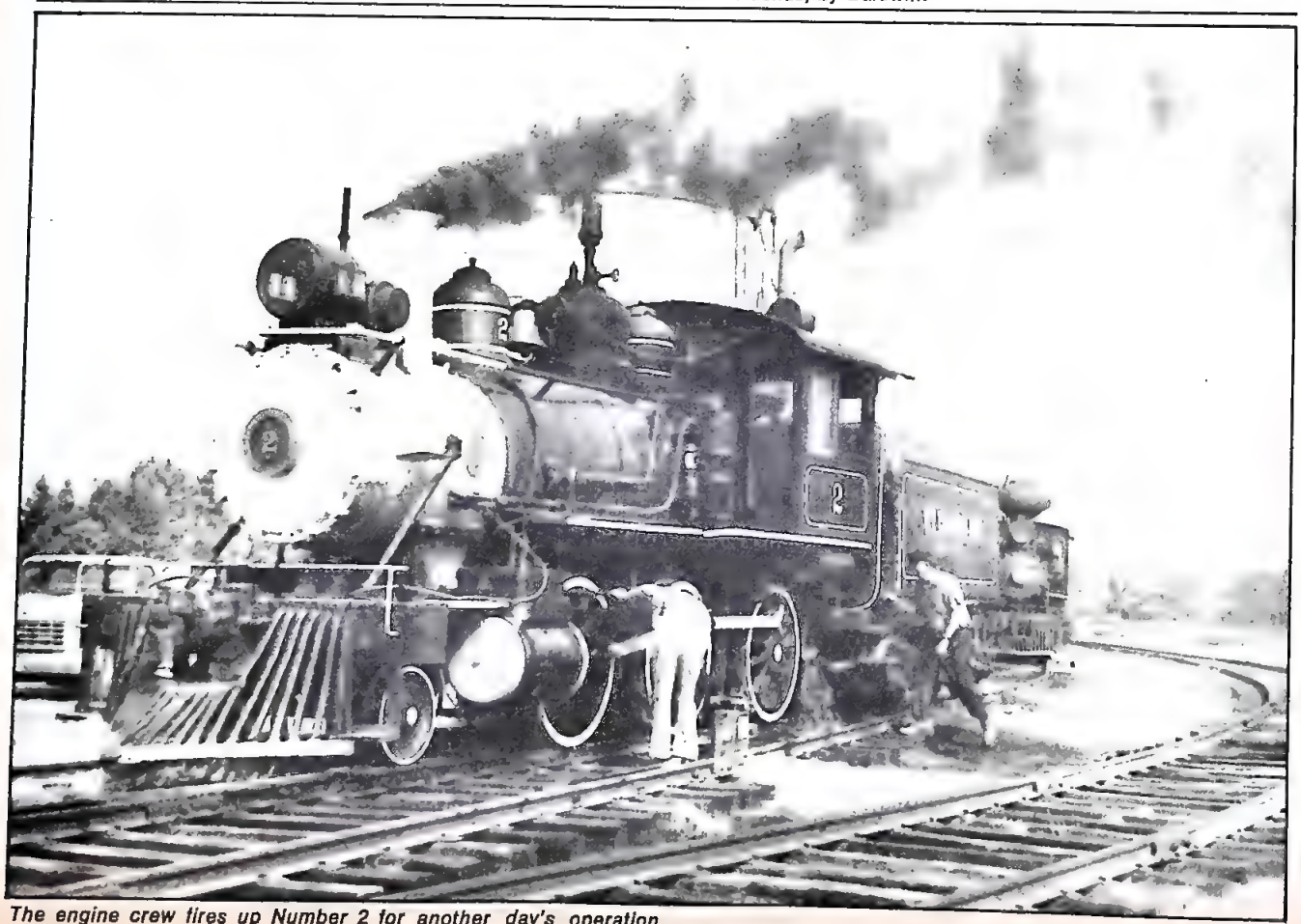
The stately old patriarch, members of his family, and many of the visitors developed a special affinity for those venerable, cumbersome steam trac-

The huge cabbage stack on locomotive No. 1 gives it that special southern look.

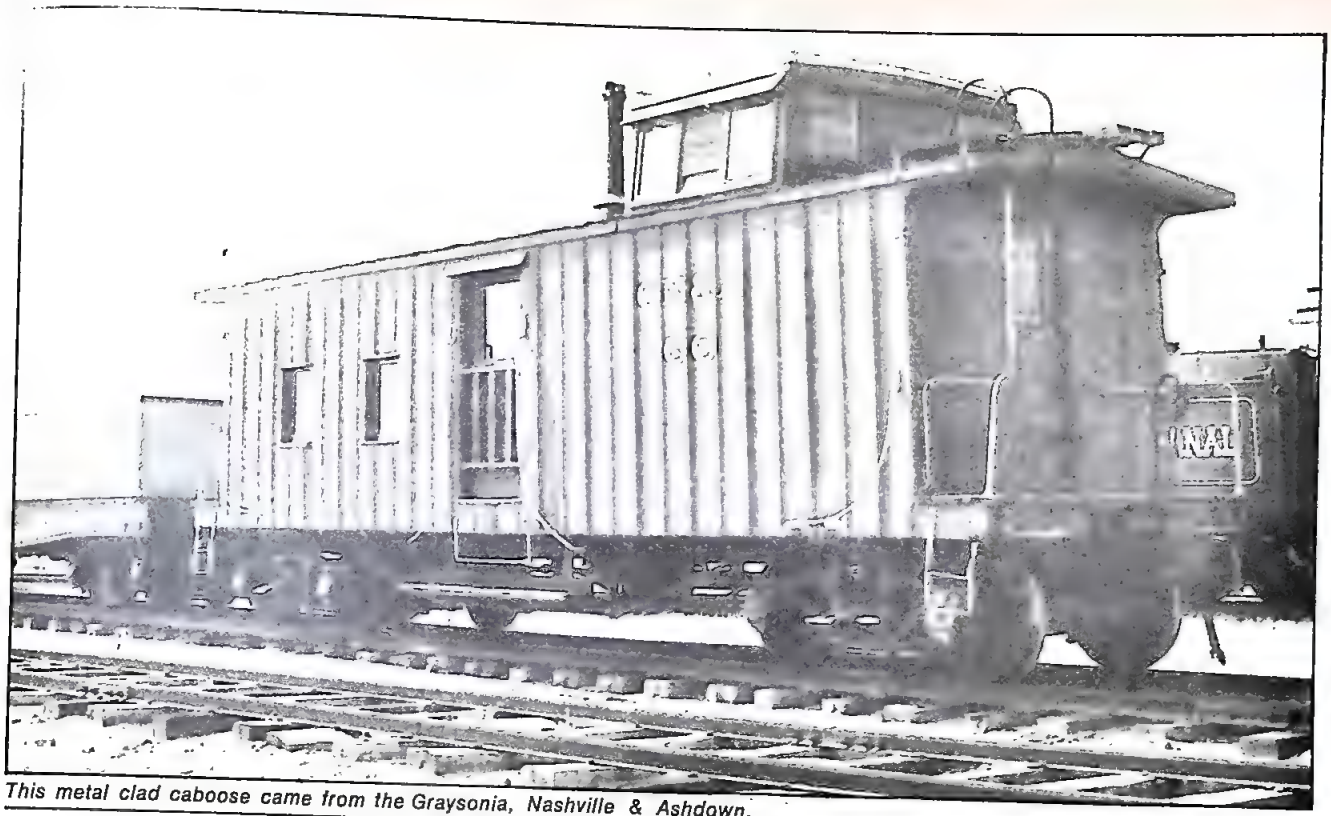




Mogul No. 1 was originally built for the Lufkin Land & Lumber Co. in Texas, by Baldwin.



The engine crew fires up Number 2 for another day's operation.



This metal clad caboose came from the Graysonia, Nashville & Ashdown.

tors. The key word here was STEAM!

In 1970 an opportunity came to acquire a steam locomotive. Bob Dortch said, "Why not? Railroads were a very important part of plantation life."

Down at Camden, Texas, the W. T. Carter family had decided to sell the vast holdings of timber lands and associated lumber business to U.S. Plywood-Champion Paper Company. The Carter outfit had used steam locomotives in their timber logging operation, and they had quite a stable of the old iron horses. Among them was a real prize—a little wood-burning Mogul with a huge Rushton "cabbage stack."

Dortch's mustache bristled; his walking cane supported his heavy, aged frame, as he said, "We'll take it! Just because it's old is no reason for it to be destroyed!" The old Mogul was loaded aboard a Southern Railway flatcar with two lengths of rails spiked down on the deck. Steel bands were fastened tightly around the engine, and steel chocks were welded to the rails to keep her secure on her trip to Arkansas. This probably was the longest single trip the old engine had made.

The round brass builder's plate on her extended smokebox proclaimed she was built in November 1906, by Burnham, Williams & Company of the Baldwin Locomotive Works at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Outward appearance said she was rusted, weather-beaten, decrepit, and neglected, but the beautiful lines of her design were visible, and she was structurally sound. Unused since 1955, and being relegated to sit exposed to weeds and weather, the old girl looked pretty sad.

All spare parts, including a whistle, needed for repairs were acquired with the engine. Several months of hard work would be required to restore her to running condition. Wood timbers of the framing of the tender, and other wood parts of the cab, had to be replaced. Metal parts were cleaned of rust by blasting with glass beads. It was decided to preserve the name "W. T. CARTER & BRO." emblazoned across the tender, and the proud number 1 on the cab, sand dome, headlight panel, and circular brass plate on the front of the smokebox. Old Number 1 arrived at Scott, Arkansas, on Wednesday morning, July 29, 1970.

The restoration of the oldest cabbage stack woodburning locomotive in the U.S. was undertaken by Robert L. Dortch, Jr., his son Robert L. Dortch III, other members of the family, and several employees. Adequate and expert supervision was in the gnarled old hands of Robert Dortch Sr.

It was learned that the wood pilot beam had been made from a Southern yellow pine tree 136 years old!

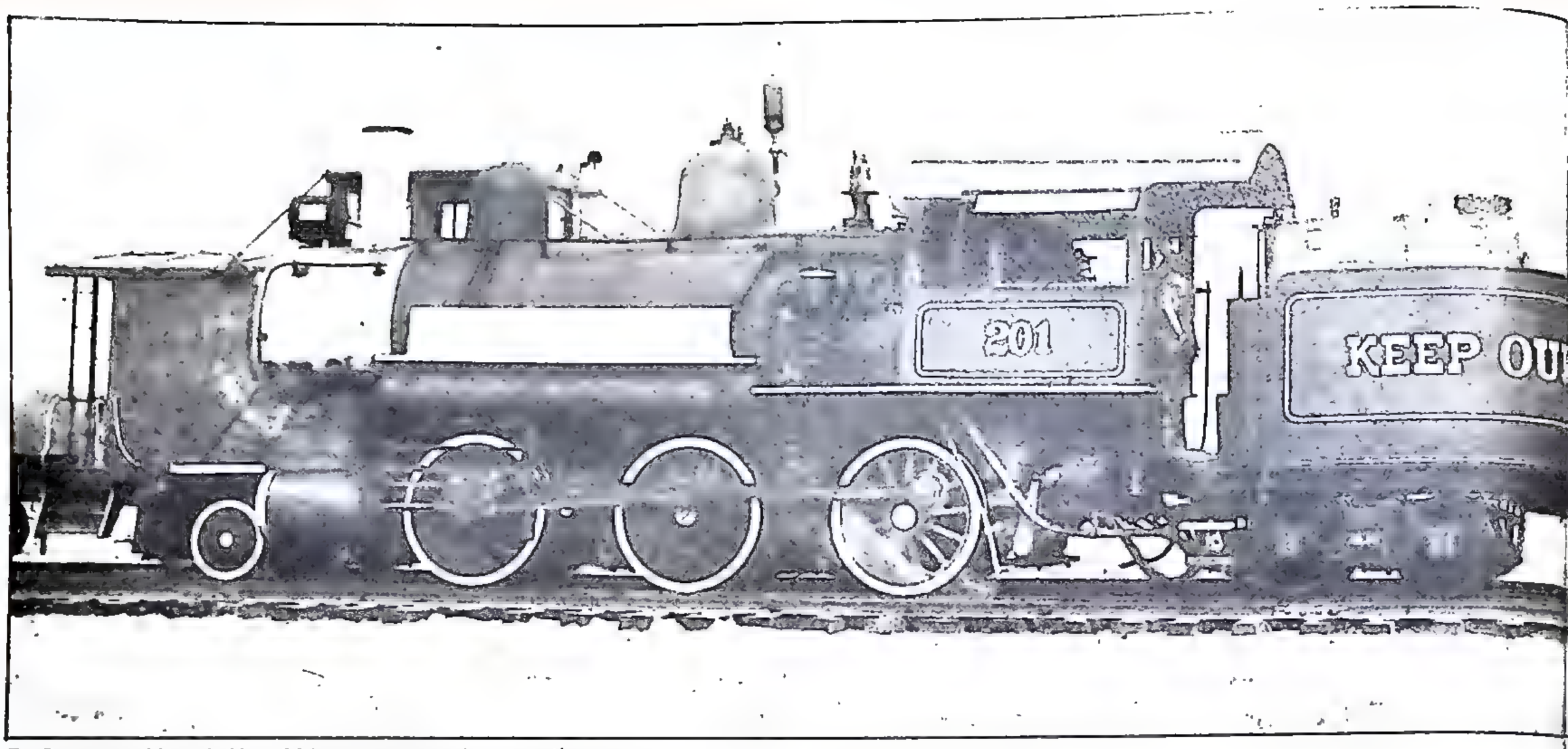
A few days later, oilburning Mogul No. 2 came in aboard a heavyduty low boy truck. She, also, was from W. T. Carter & Brother.

On Sunday morning, December 21, 1971, another Mogul steam locomotive arrived at the Plantation Museum, aboard a Southern Pacific flatcar, via the Cotton Belt. She was number 201, also from W. T. Carter & Brother at Camden, Texas. This old gal was built in January 1906 by the American Locomotive Works at Paterson, New Jersey, for the Isthmian Canal Commission, the U.S. company which was building the great Panama Canal. More than 100 of these 2-6-0 type locomotives were built by Alco and Baldwin for work on the Panama Canal. It is said that 201 is one of only three which have survived, and only the 201 is operating.

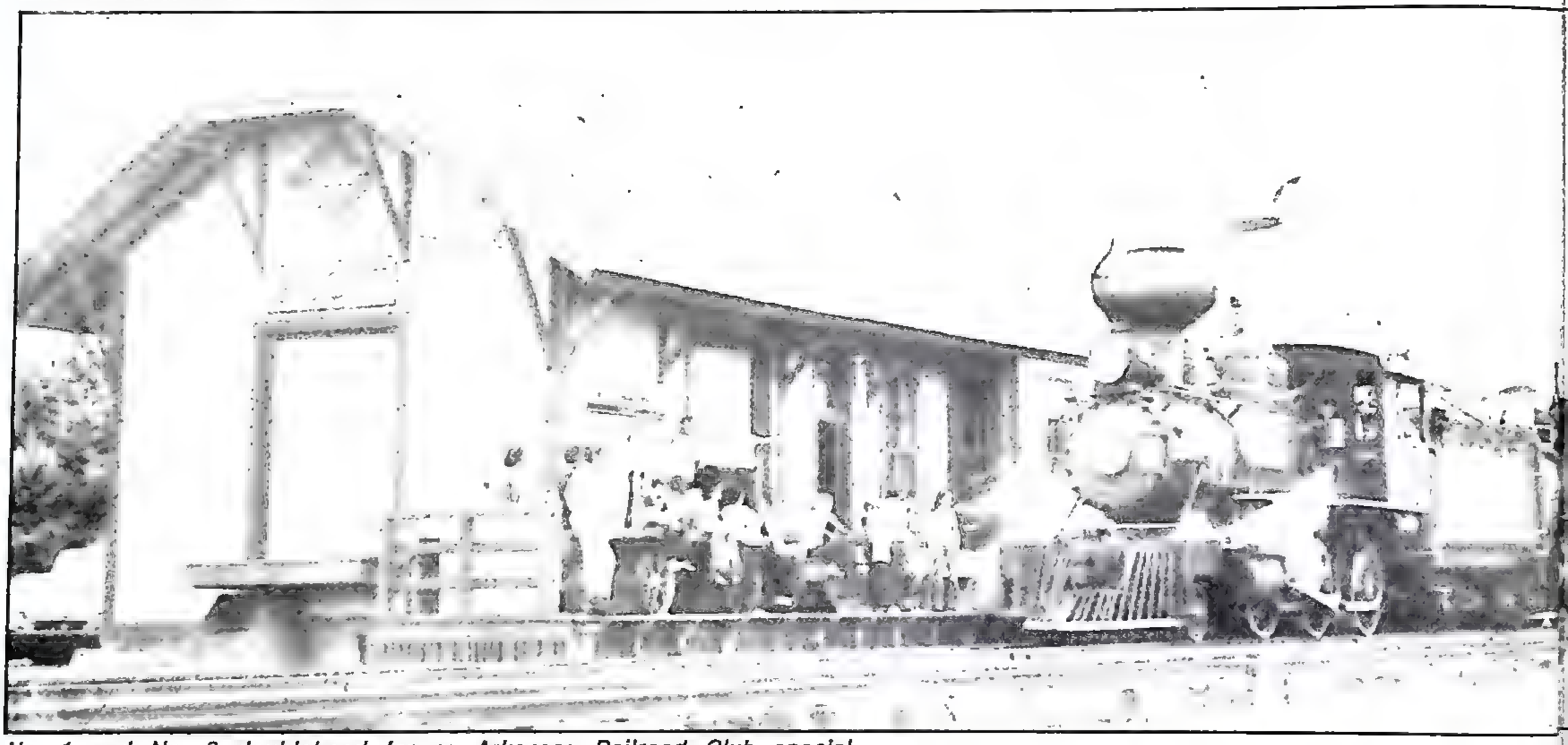
The 201 was built as a coal burner for the canal operation. At the Carter company in Camden, Texas, it was converted to a woodburner for logging in the forests. In 1929 there was a conversion to burning oil, and it has so remained.

In 1929, number 201 was taken out of the woods and put to work in a dignified manner on the Moscow, Camden & San Augustine Railroad, a subsidiary of the W. F. Carter & Brother Company. The MC&SA was incorporated in May 1898, and built 65 miles between Camden and St. Augustine, Texas.

At the time the 201 was acquired, there were also available a good supply of 50-pound rails rolled in 1879-80, a turntable, and crossties. Dortch took all of it.



Ex-Panama Mogul No. 201 expresses her sentiments.



No. 1 and No. 2 doublehead for an Arkansas Railroad Club special.

More ideas were running through the mind of Robert Dortch. "Why have two steam locomotives sitting around in running condition and not run them?" He had rails to run them on and a turntable to change directions. The turntable was an "armstrong" model, but that was deemed fitting for turning early 1900's model engines.

Thus, the first idea for the Scott & Bearskin Lake Railway was born. The elder Dortch and son Robert, Jr., talked frequently with the author about plans to build an operating railroad across the plantation. Those were exciting days!

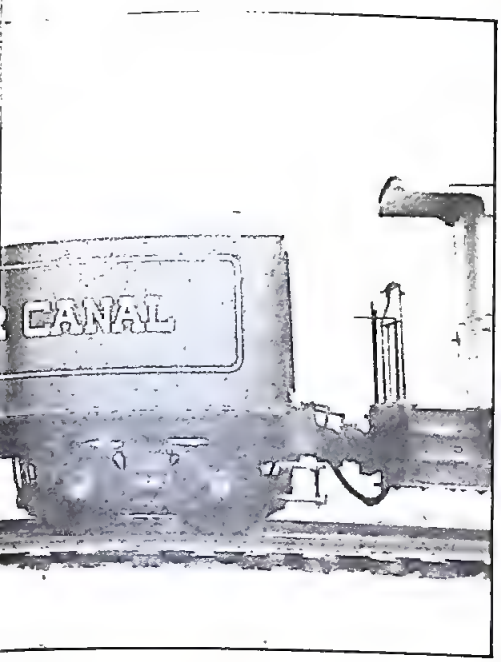
In the spring of 1972, the members of the Arkansas Railroad Club, the Arkansas Chapter of National Railway Historical Society, founded December 1969, decided to have their annual family-style picnic at the Dortch Plantation. Bob Dortch, Jr., was a club member and enthusiastically invited everyone to come on down to the farm. We all were eager for the opportunity to spend a day running and riding behind the fully restored woodburner No. 1. She was a real beauty in operation.

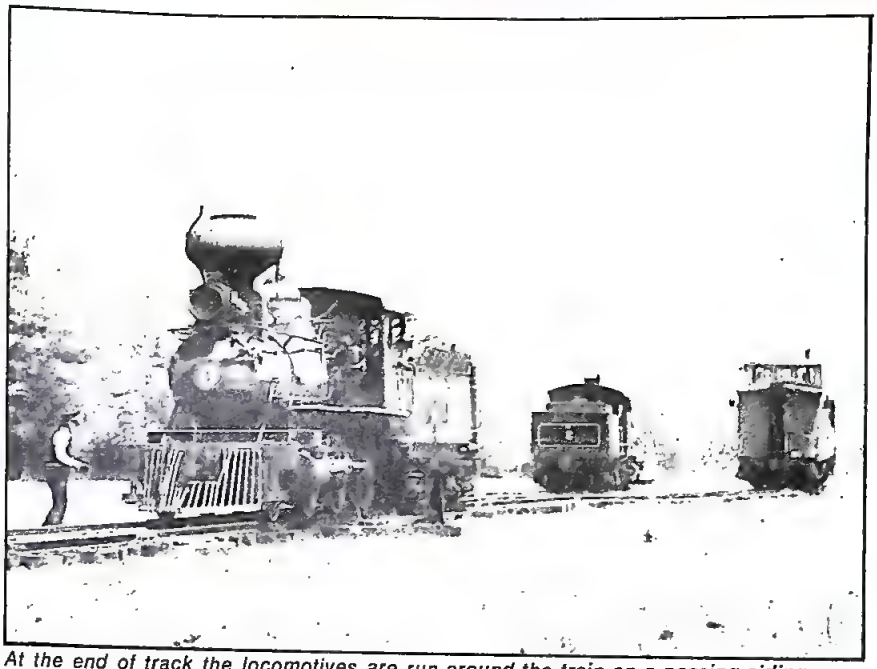
A spur track about 400 feet long, of the Cotton Belt, served a warehouse of the plantation. It was protected by a derail near the mainline, so we used it for short runs. Fuel for the engine was no problem. An excelsior company in North Little Rock was going out of business and Bob had bought almost 400 cords of good dry wood.

In 1897 the Cotton Belt built a fine wood depot at Scott to serve the plantation and surrounding area. Several years ago, the station was abandoned, and Dortch acquired it for a storage building. Since the old structure was very sound and sturdy, the decision was made to refurbish it for use on the S&BL.

Two cabooses were obtained in 1972. The first was a tongue-and-groove, wood sided job from the old Louisiana & North West at Homer, La. Number 214 was built in the early 1900's for the Cotton Belt.

The second caboose was from the





At the end of track the locomotives are run around the train on a passing siding.

Arkansas shortline Graysonia, Nashville & Ashdown at Nashville. This road is owned by Ideal Cement Company. Number 60 was homemade by GN&A in the 1920s. To keep maintenance at a minimum, the crummy was sheathed very trimly in sheet metal. It was featured by Lucius Beebe in his famous book *Mixed Train Daily*.

A third caboose was donated to the S&BL in 1973 by Dr. Carl Northcutt at Stuttgart, Arkansas.

It was most unfortunate, indeed, that Robert Dortch, Sr., did not live to see the completion of the railroad and operation of his beloved old steam locomotives. The grand old Southern gentleman died in 1972. Many pleasant hours were spent just listening to tales of yesteryears and the enthusiastic plans for tomorrow. His tomorrow never came.

Plans called for rails to be laid across the level sandy loam fields of the plantation, beginning at the relocated depot beside Highway 130, and extending about four miles to the deep, dark waters of cypress tree lined Bearskin Lake, an ancient bendway of the Arkansas River.

In the spring of 1973, the depot was slowly and carefully moved eastward across the highway to its present resting place. A complete refurbishing was begun. A professional track building crew was hired and they laid a spur line across the highway. The locomotives then were moved over beside the depot. The crew slowly extended the rails across the plantation at the end of the long, arrow-straight rows of cotton, passing through a low, shallow area containing a heavy growth of large cottonwood trees. Shade here is dark and cool. The standard gauge track was temporarily terminated in a large pasture just beyond the trees. A track was laid parallel to the main so that the engines could run around the train for the return run to the depot, about 1.5 miles.

The year of 1973 was a very busy one on the S&BL. It was learned that down in Hilliard, Florida, there was an ancient wood coach for sale by the American Railroad Equipment Museum. A special train of old cars was to run to California, and arrangements were made for the old coach to be set out at Pine Bluff, Arkansas. The Cotton Belt picked it up and brought it to Scott.

The car was a coach-smoker built in 1895 by Barney & Smith for the Central of Georgia. It carried number 115, was 75 feet long, and would seat 70 passengers. There were two six-wheel trucks under it, and the body and frame were of wood. The color was standard Pullman green.

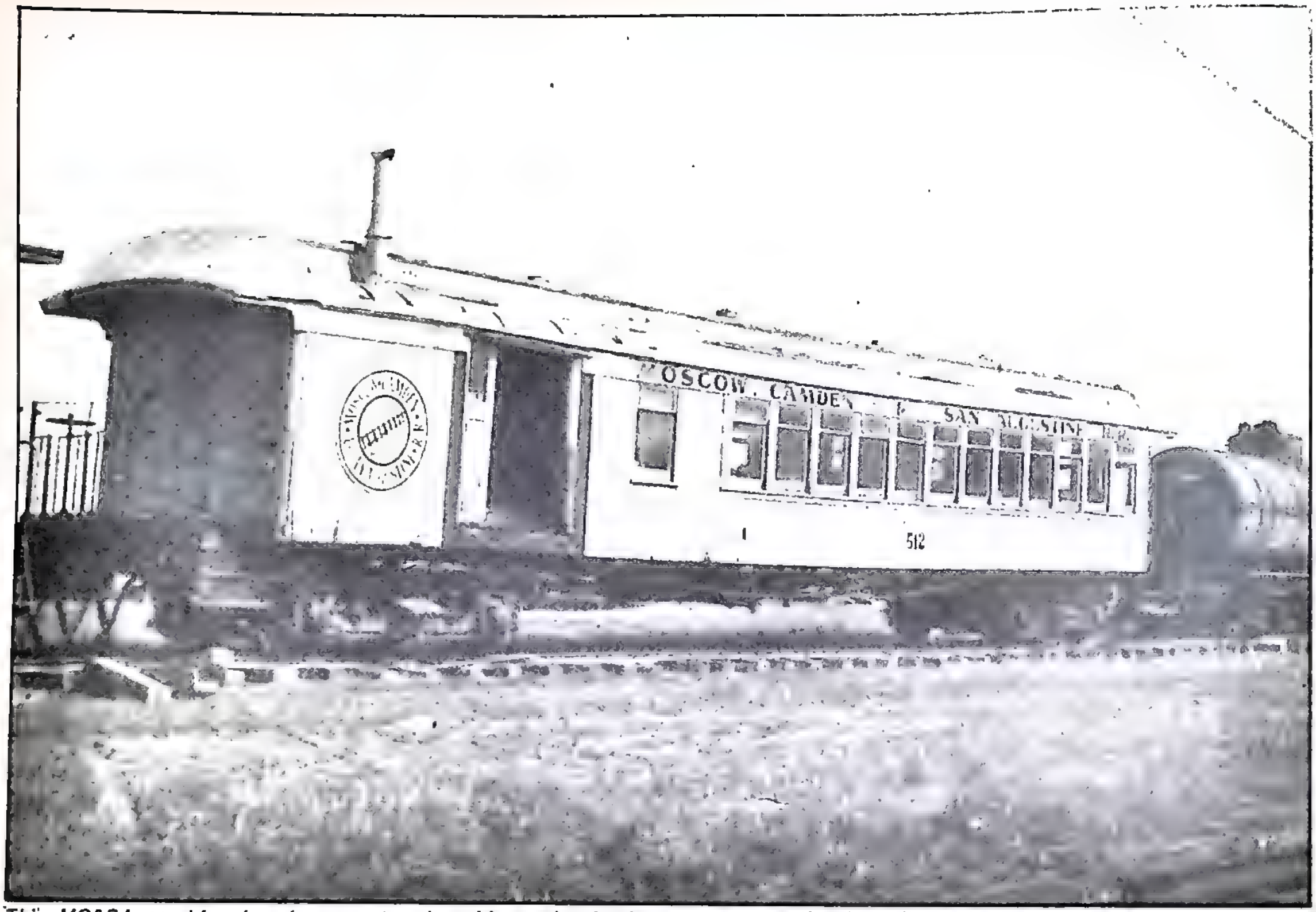
Two partitions, each with a fan-shaped transom of mullioned stained glass, provided a smoking room in the middle of the car. There was a vestibule and restroom at each end, one having a copper basin. Brass spigots adorned the water coolers. The original coalburning heating stove was in good condition. The American Reversible seats all had dark green velvet upholstering.

The old coach was last operated by the Georgia Northern in 1942 in troop train service during World War II.

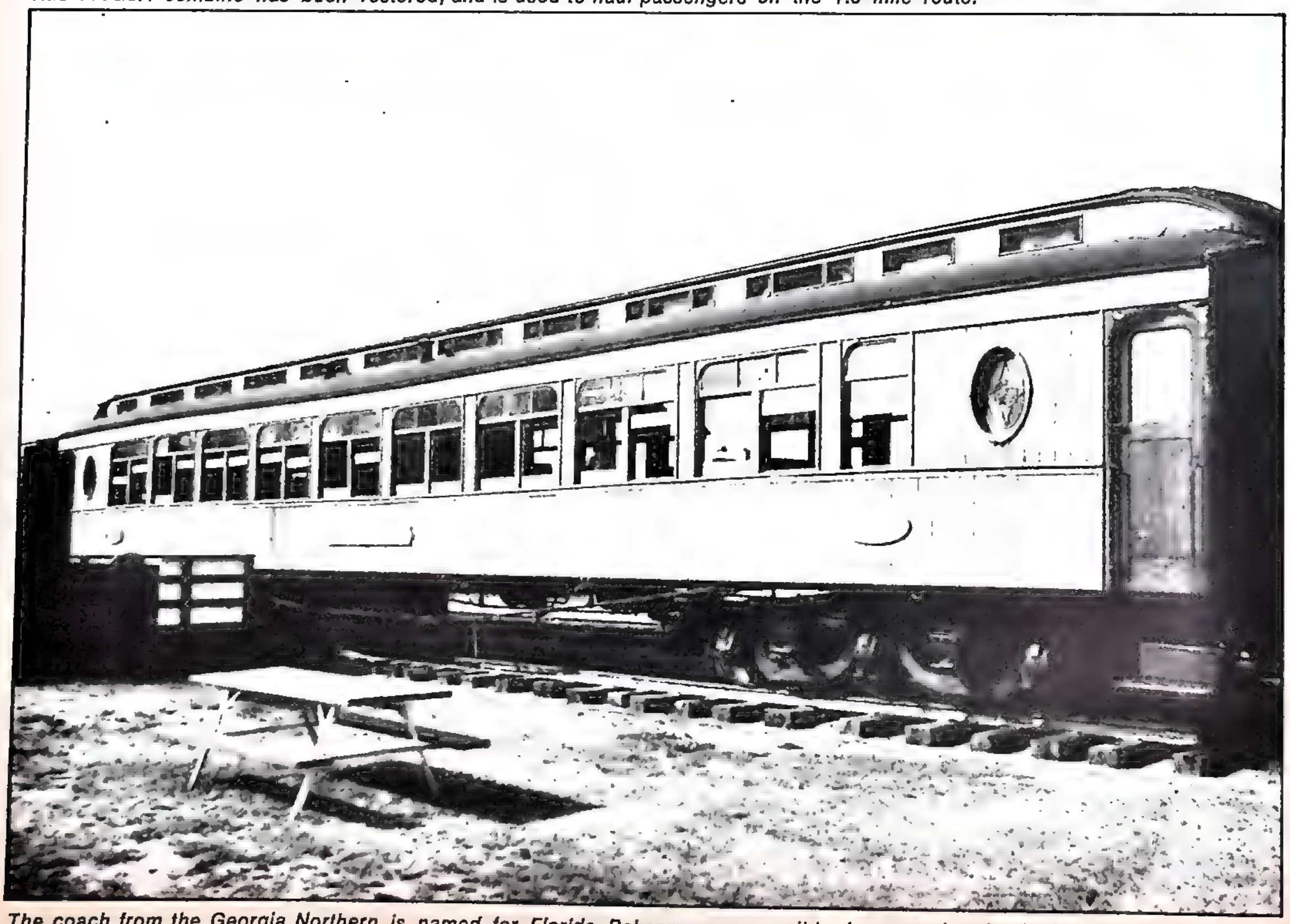
A tremendous job of restoration was begun by Bob Dortch's sister, Floride Rebsamen. She spent several months in the coach painstakingly stripping away the accumulation of grime and neglect. Finally the beautiful wood surface was revealed, and a heavy protecting finish was applied. A routed wood nameplate "Floride" graces the side of the refinished coach, and on the letterboard is *Georgia Northern* in bright goldleaf.

During the summer of 1973 two flat cars were stripped to the frames and "Knockout" Adams and a crew of volunteers constructed a pair of ornate, open platform excursion cars, numbers 301 and 302. These cars have since been sold to the Reader Railroad, a tourist remnant of the old Possum Trot Line.

This same crew built the water tow-



This MC&SA combine has been restored, and is used to haul passengers on the 1.5 mile route.



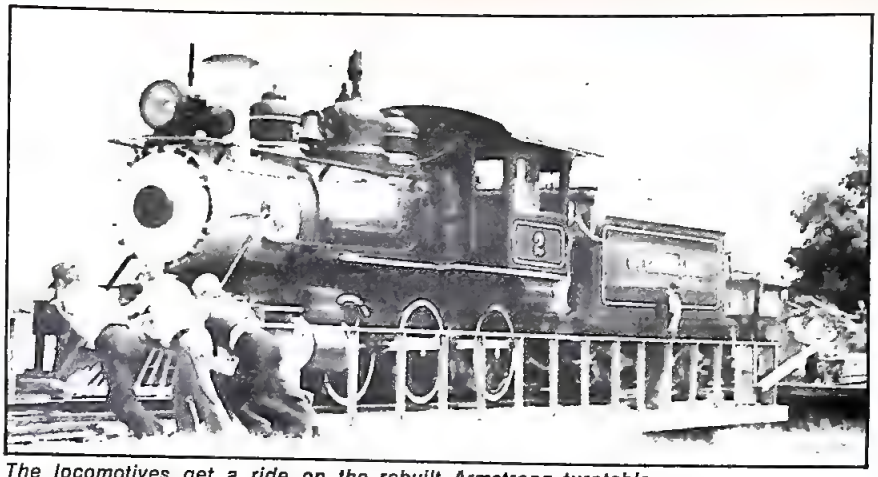
The coach from the Georgia Northern is named for Floride Rebsamen, responsible for restoring its looks.

and its metal tank; installed the 10-ton, 54-foot turntable from the Moscow, Camden & San Augustine; helped renovate the depot, adding a track-side platform for easy loading, and installing flush-type restrooms.

The support columns for the water tank came from the little El Dorado & Wesson, another Arkansas shortline, and are made of heart-cypress. The tank was made from the best parts of two tanks and put together with more than 1,200 bolts. A huge crane was used to lift it into position, and it holds 1,100 gallons.

About this time another piece of equipment arrived. It was a mail-passenger coach combine from the MC& SA at Camden, Texas. It was built in 1898 by Pullman for commuter service on the Long Island Railway, and still has the original rattan "walk-over" seats, oak paneling, frosted glass transom, and will seat about 60 passengers. The car made revenue trips as late as August 1972 on the MC&SA.

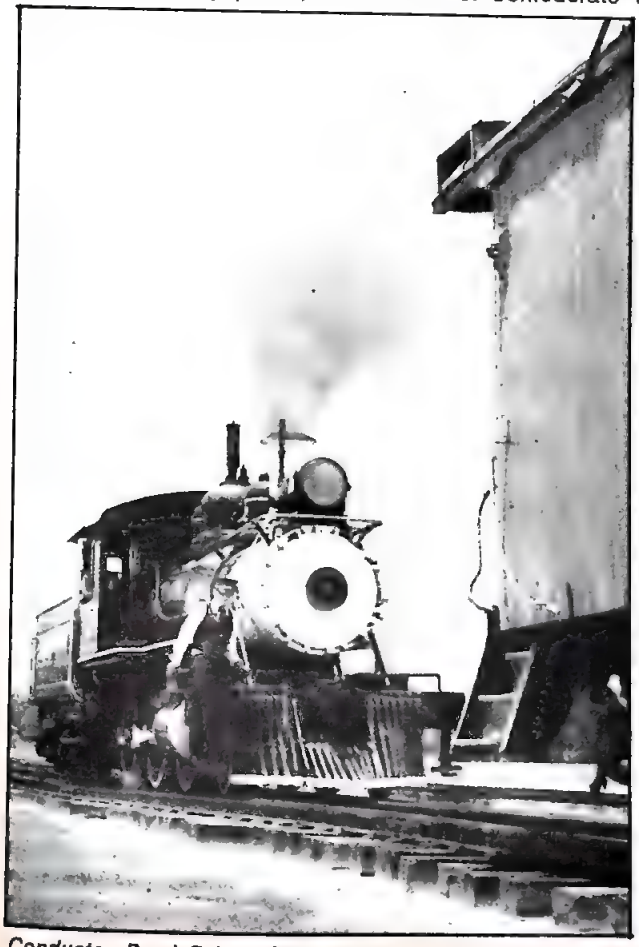
When the old depot was completely renovated, it sported the standard butter-yellow and brown trim of the Cotton Belt; two waiting rooms and a center ticket office were kept intact, but two restrooms were installed in the baggage and freight area. Also, there are telegraph equipment, a service counter, two ticket windows, brass lighting fixtures, and the original bay window. A concession stand was installed in one of the waiting rooms. Mounted outside is a semaphore train order signal, from the Rock Island somewhere in Kansas.



The locomotives get a ride on the rebuilt Armstrong turntable.

On July 4, 1974, the Scott & Bearskin Lake was officially opened for business. To celebrate the occasion, the Arkansas Rackensack Society provided authentic folk music; the First Arkansas Infantry Regiment of the Jackson County Historical Society and the Sixth Arkansas Infantry of the Sons of Confederate Veterans re-enacted a Civil War battle complete with cannons; a fireworks display at 9:30 p.m. was a brilliant finale. But the main attraction was the operation of the restored old steam locomotives, proudly rolling along in their traditional and historic beauty.

A segment of the past has been preserved and is in smoking action each weekend April through October. The dreams of patriarch Robert Dortch have come to pass, and perhaps he is smiling proudly as he looks down on the coming and going of his steam locomotives on the Scott & Bearskin Lake Railway.



Conductor Boyd Pyle switches some cars around with Mogul No. 2.

CHRONOLOGY OF EQUIPMENT

LOCOMOTIVE NO. 1

Mogul 2-6-0, Rushton "cabbage stack"
Baldwin, Nov. 1906
Woodburner
Wt. approx. 50 tons

Lufkin Land & Lumber Co., Lufkin, Texas 1906, original owners
Shreveport, Houston & Gulf R.R., Manning, Texas 1910
Carter Kelley Lumber Co., Manning, Texas 1913
W. T. Carter & Bro. Lumber Co., Camden, Texas 1936
Scott & Bearskin Lake Ry., Scott, Ark. 1970

LOCOMOTIVE NO. 2

Mogul 2-6-0, capped stack
Baldwin, Jan. 1907; converted from woodburner to oilburner in late 1930s
Wt. approx. 50 tons

Lufkin Land & Lumber Co., Lufkin, Texas 1906, original owners
Shreveport, Houston & Gulf R.R., Manning, Texas 1910
Carter Kelley Lbr. Co., Manning, Texas 1913
W. T. Carter & Bro. Lumber Co., Camden, Texas 1936
Scott & Bearskin Lake Ry., Scott, Ark. 1970

LOCOMOTIVE NO. 201

Mogul 2-6-0, straight stack
American Loco. Co., Jan. 1906; converted from coalburner to oilburner in late 1930s
Wt. approx. 87 tons

Isthmian Canal Commission, Panama 1906, original owner
Equitable Equipment Co., New Orleans, La. 1917
W. T. Carter & Brother Lumber Co., Camden, Texas 1922
Moscow, Camden & San Augustine R.R., Camden, Texas 1929
Scott & Bearskin Lake Ry., Scott, Ark. 1971

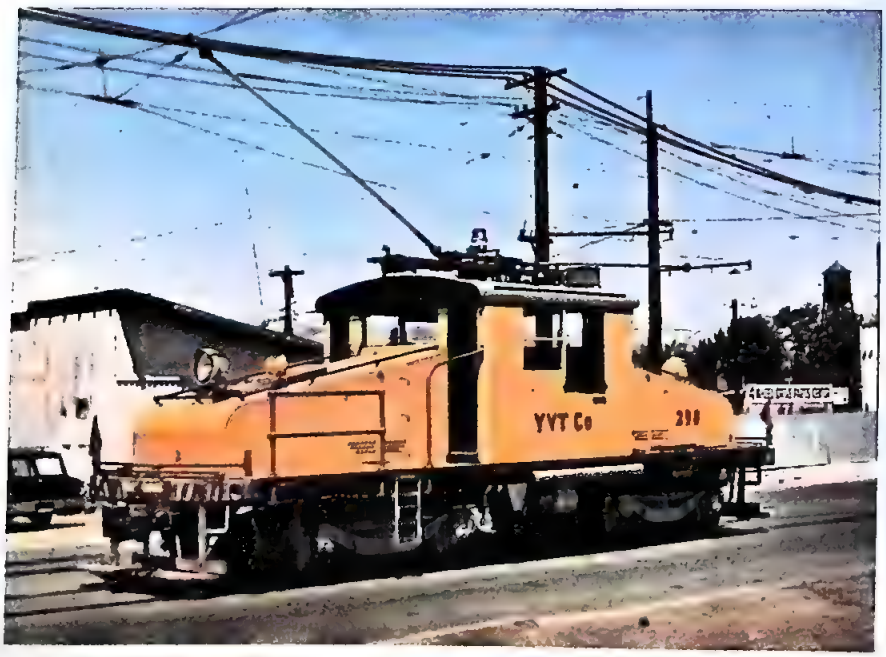
Texas Transportation #1 was built in 1917 for the Monongahela West Penn Public Service. William Tasker

TROLLEY FREIGHT

IT SURVIVES FOR UNUSUAL REASONS

By Van Wilkins

Photos by Stephen D. Maguire except as noted



Once there were 16,000 miles of interurban line in the United States. Most of this trackage was designed for passenger service, and freight was limited to express, milk, and less-than-carload-lot traffic carried in the baggage compartment or on the front platform. A few lines, most of them west of the Mississippi, did build with freight service in mind. They managed to secure access to steam railroad tariffs and could thus interchange with steam roads. Elsewhere a few handled carload traffic from their steam competitors, generally over short sections of the electric route to serve specific industries otherwise inaccessible by rail.

In the 1920s much interchange of freight trailers took place between electric lines in Ohio and Indiana, and even powered equipment went far from home rails. In general, however, interurbans were not successful

The Village of East Troy, Wisconsin says that its seven mile long railroad is still electrically operated. However, the single box motor M-15, seen here in 1962, hasn't moved a box car in many months.

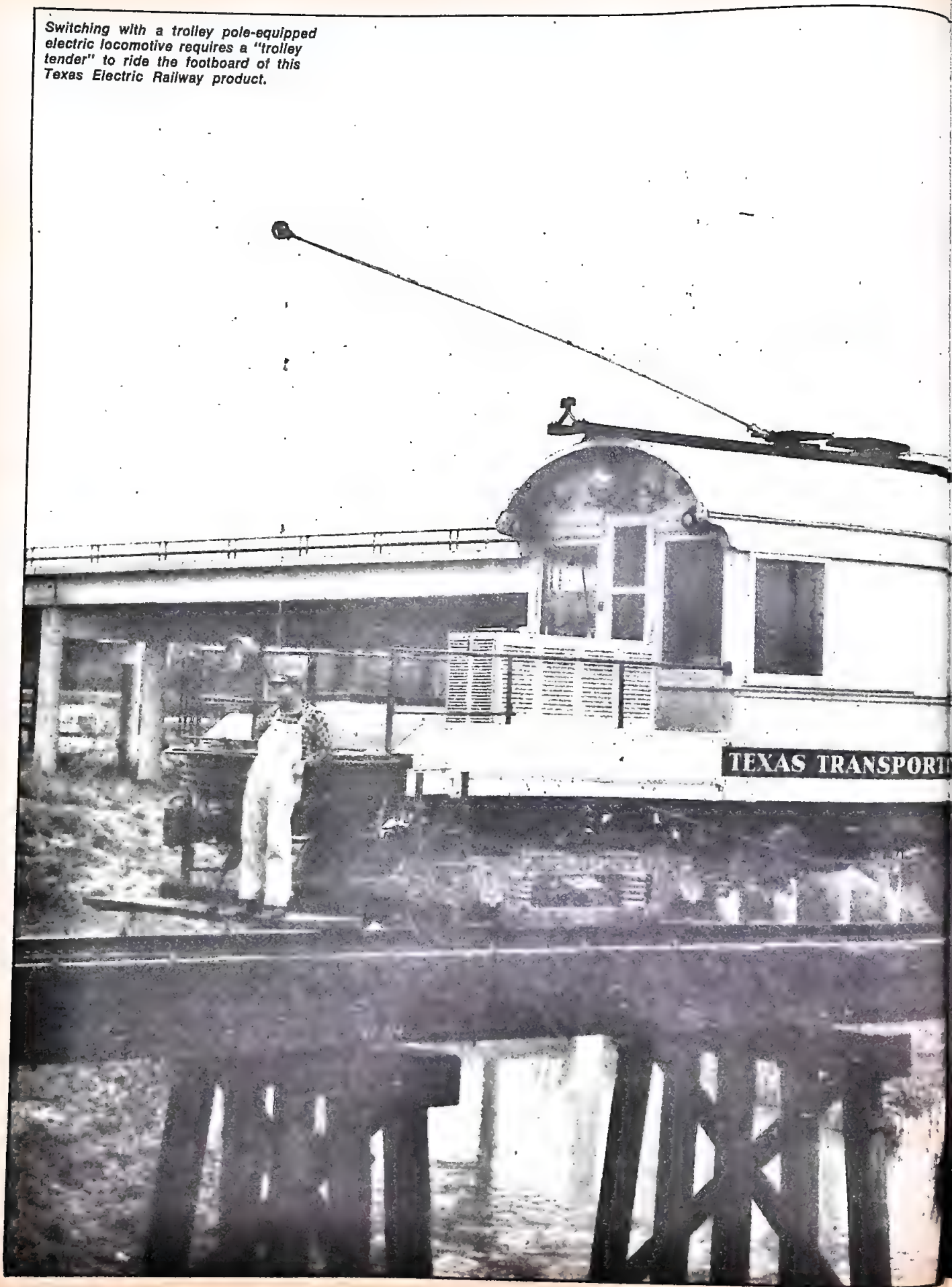
freight carriers, and only 2100 miles of the interurban network developed enough carload freight to become integrated into the general railroad network of the country and to survive into the 1970s.

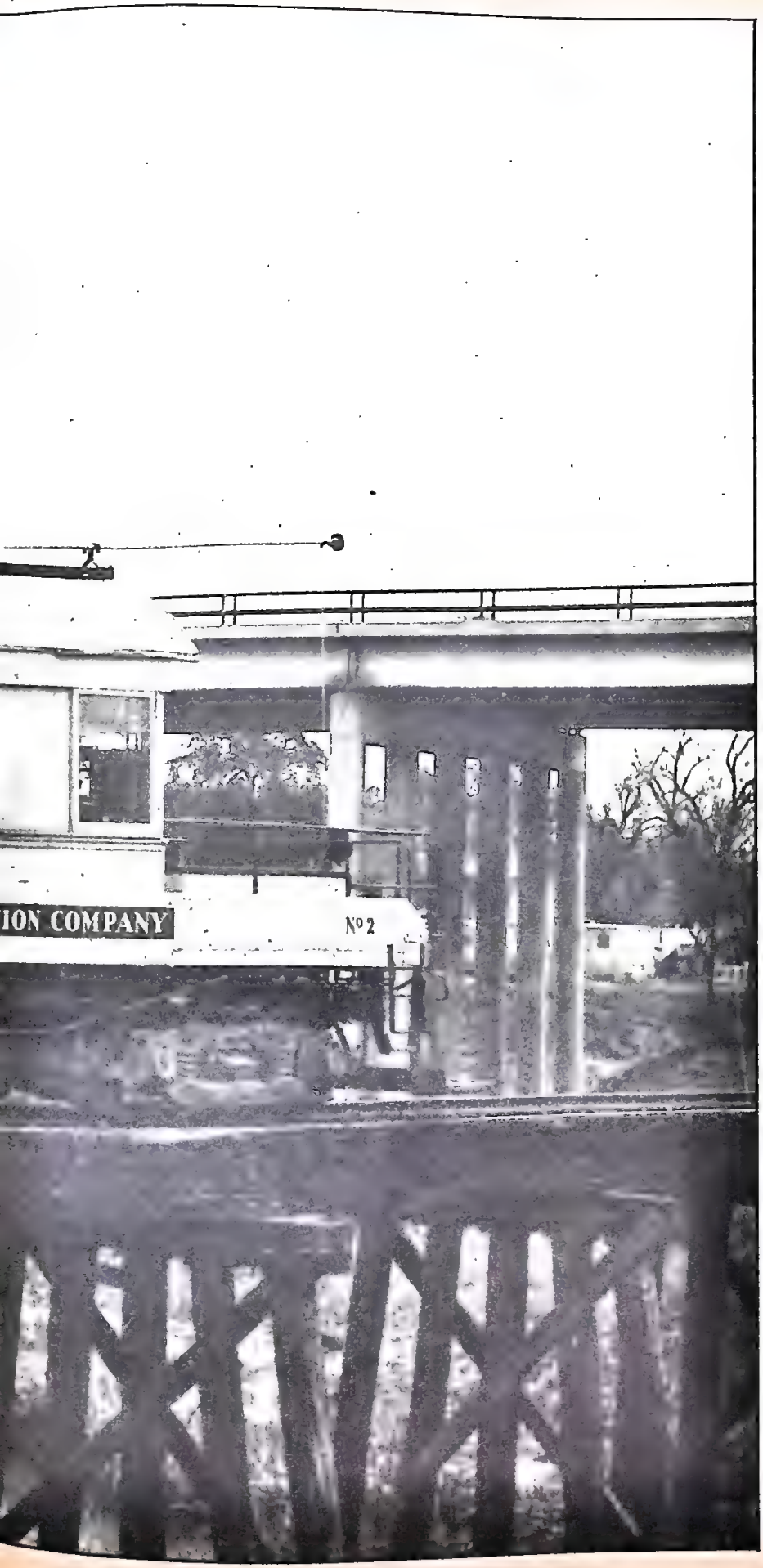
Of these 2100 miles something less than 130 can now be operated electrically, and 90 miles of this total are accounted for by the Chicago, South Shore & South Bend—the last passenger-carrying interurban. The South Shore's three 273-ton, 24-wheeled "Little Joe" electric locomotives are impressive, but much too large to qualify as "trolley freight," the subject of this article. Other South Shore electric locos, including even the ex-New York Central R-2s, have been retired, and diesels have appeared. As this is written, the survival of South Shore passenger service is in doubt, and if it is discontinued the wire will certainly come down.

The remaining 39 miles of line do qualify as trolley freight in the conventional sense and are the last remnants of our interurbans. Even this stretches a point, since one of the survivors could never have been by any

Passenger service disappeared from Yakima in 1947, to reappear in 1974 in the form of two Brill products obtained from Porto, Portugal.
Yakima Interurban Trolley Lines

Switching with a trolley pole-equipped electric locomotive requires a "trolley tender" to ride the footboard of this Texas Electric Railway product.





definition called an interurban. The other three operations certainly were, however.

Most of the locomotives on these anachronisms date from the early twenties, with two having been built in 1917. Even the newest left the erecting floor in 1933, and it traces its ancestry back to 1908. Most have had several owners, passing from one line to another as interurbans were abandoned or dieselized. Parts for such equipment are now very scarce commodities, and the present owners keep them running through ingenuity, perseverance, tender loving care, and as a last resort—cannibalism.

One line boasts a history of continuous electric operation since 1897. Another comes in a close second—1898. A third still claims to operate electrically (and indeed wire is still up and an electric locomotive is on the premises), but moves its traffic behind a diesel. One exists to move beer and another, fruit.

These roads have survived as electrics for a variety of reasons. These include economics, labor law, physical characteristics, franchise limitations, and in at least one case an apparent affection on the part of the operators for electric operation.

Half of the remaining common carrier trolley freight mileage is operated by, of all things, a subsidiary of the Union Pacific—one of the most modern railroads in the country. This gem is the Yakima Valley Transportation Company of Yakima, Washington. The UP acquired the line while it was still under construction in 1907 and developed it as a freight feeder in competition with the Northern Pacific. Local passenger service was provided in Yakima, and conventional Niles-built interurbans plied the two routes to surrounding towns.

Freight was the life-blood, however, and the strings of refrigerator cars loaded with Yakima Valley fruit and box cars with lumber moved through the streets of the city to the connection with the UP parent. The franchise provided that freight could move only so long as passenger service was provided, and this requirement led first to the purchase and operation in the 1930s of three Brill Master Units and then in the 1940s to serious consideration of the acquisition of PCC trolleys. This would have been the smallest PCC "fleet" in the country, but the city opted for buses, and the Master Units went to Portland.

The new franchise allowed some freight to move, but volume was cut by half, because the city forced closure of the line which gave access to a major lumber mill. The remainder of the system, including one interurban route and part of the second, remains

intact today, and fruit and lumber continue to roll. Due respect is paid, however, to municipal limits on operation during rush hours and at various other times when the squeal of flanges on short-radius curves might disturb the tranquillity of the city.

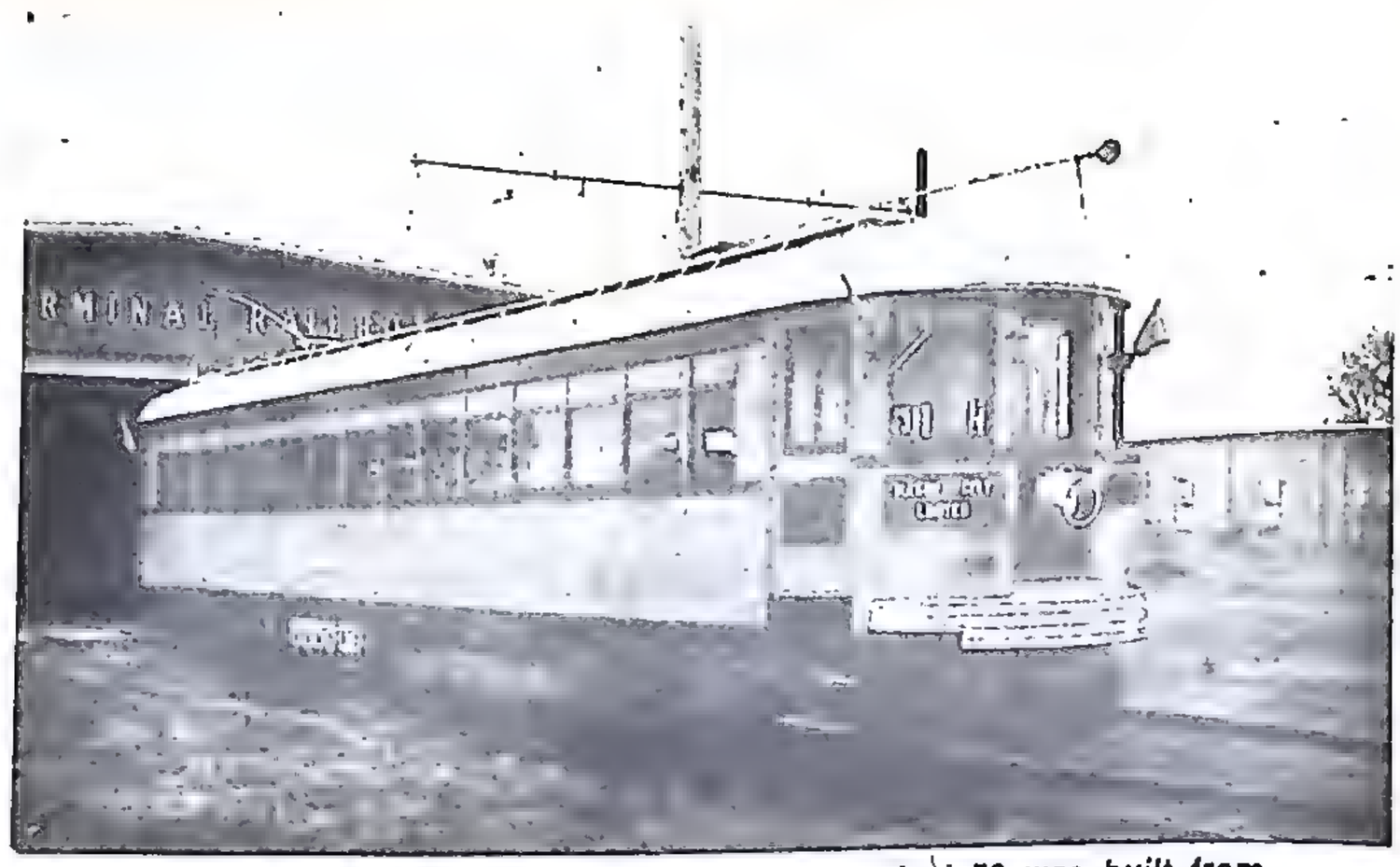
Service is maintained with two steeple cab locomotives, typical products of the two major builders of such motive power in the U.S. Number 298 usually provides service. It is unique on two counts, since it is the only surviving General Electric loco of its generation still in common carrier service, and it has had only one owner since it was built in 1922. When it requires shopping, 297, a Baldwin-Westinghouse product of 1923, takes over. It came from the Glendale & Montrose in California and carried a UP number for a time.

Why has electric operation survived here? Physical characteristics of the line are a factor. When diesels were considered, it was felt that they could not cope as well with the very sharp curves and a ruling grade of 3.8 percent which the electrics handle easily. In addition, diesel operations would bring into play Washington's full crew law, with an attendant increase in labor costs. Spare parts are a problem, as is the case with the other surviving trolley freight lines, but thus far a resourceful shop crew has managed.

And now it is possible to ride over the YVT again. The city that rejected Master Units and PCCs now owns two cars of its own and runs them regularly in tourist service. Maintained and operated by the YVT, this pair of Brill products served in Portugal for many years and can now be chartered for trips over the system. At certain times the casual tourist can ride without having to make prior arrangements. It has been a long time since a single truck, deck roof trolley could be ridden for any appreciable distance in a rural atmosphere in the United States or Canada. In Yakima it is now possible, but of course freight remains the mainstay of the line. Despite ownership by a corporate giant, the spirit of accommodation and service typical of a short line has done much to keep the traffic on the rails and under wire.

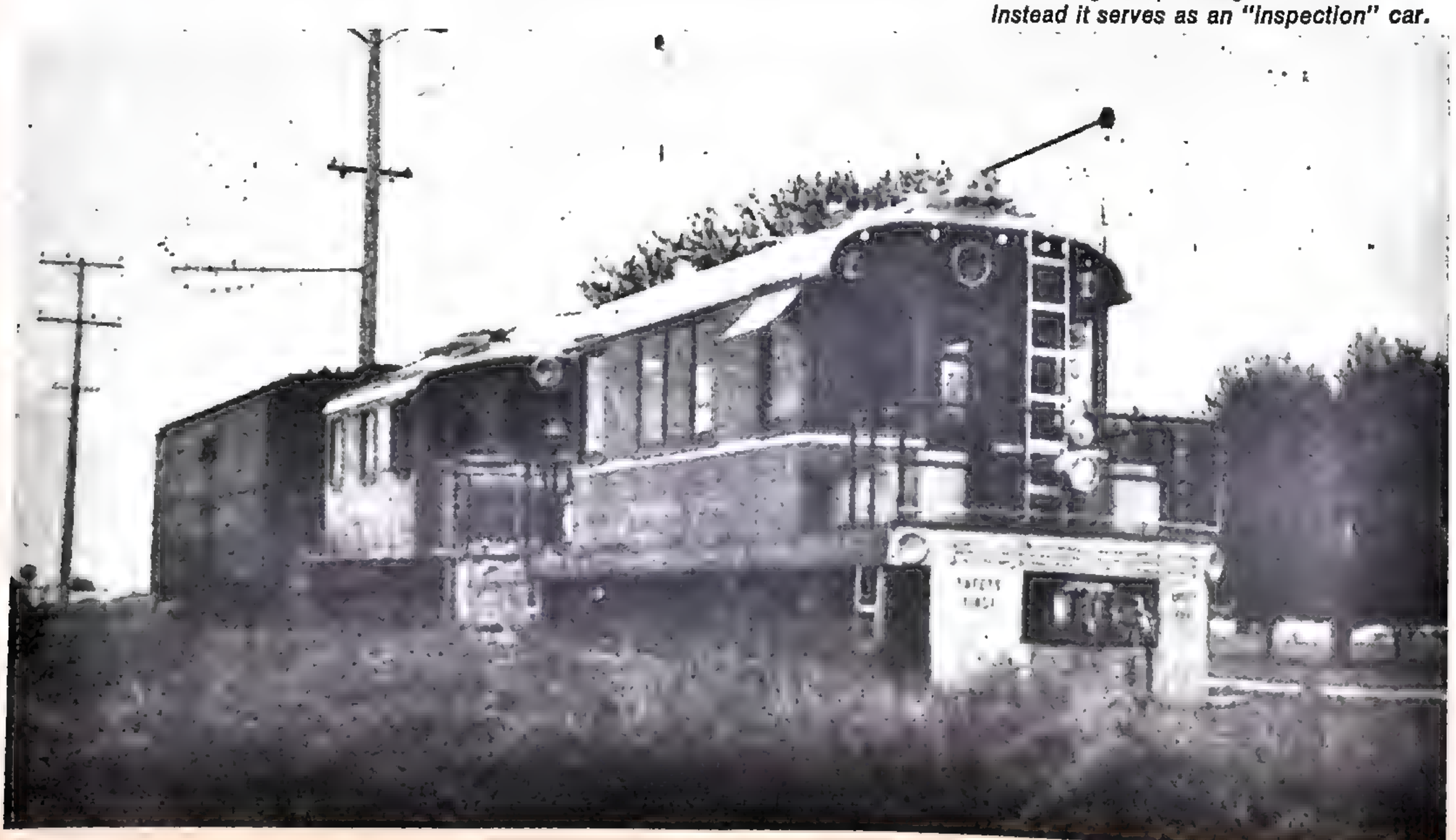
This same kind of spirit helped to keep the Iowa Terminal Railroad in operation. The State of Iowa once had the third largest interurban mileage west of the Mississippi, exceeded only by California and Texas. Of the nearly 500 miles, almost half remains in service today, but only the 10.4 miles of the IT's Mason City Division is electrically operated.

The Iowa Terminal was formed in 1960 to take over the Mason City & Clear Lake Railway. In 1963 it gained control of the nearby Charles City Western, then still moving freight electrically. Passenger service on the MC&CL had ended in 1935 and on the CCW in 1952, but both had developed freight service early in their



Iowa Terminal 53 was built from scratch by the Texas Electric Railway in 1928. Here it hauls a "dead" Baldwin-Westinghouse steeple cab to the shop.

ITR 102, a North Shore veteran, is not in regular passenger service. Instead it serves as an "inspection" car.



histories and had survived on interchange with connecting steam roads. As a result of severe tornado damage a decision was taken in 1968 to dieselize the CCW, and diesels continue in service today.

The Mason City Division is another story. Built in 1897 to connect the city with the resort area at Clear Lake, the line is now said to be the oldest interurban continuously operated by electricity in the United States. Considering the few left, this isn't terribly impressive. During World War II it was also noted for the efforts of a local sheriff to ensure that railfans didn't get photos of the operation, so sure was he that it was a prime target for enemy sabotage.

The original builders had freight hauling in mind and managed to negotiate tariffs with a number of steam roads. Before the days of mechanical refrigeration, ice cut from the lake in the winter moved off-line. Incoming coal was also an important commodity. The line also handled quantities of grain, dairy products, and petroleum, and until 1960 livestock bound for Chicago moved out weekly. Few interurbans handled livestock, due to the hazards to citizens and the public health as such shipments moved through the streets, but this seems not to have been a problem in this case.

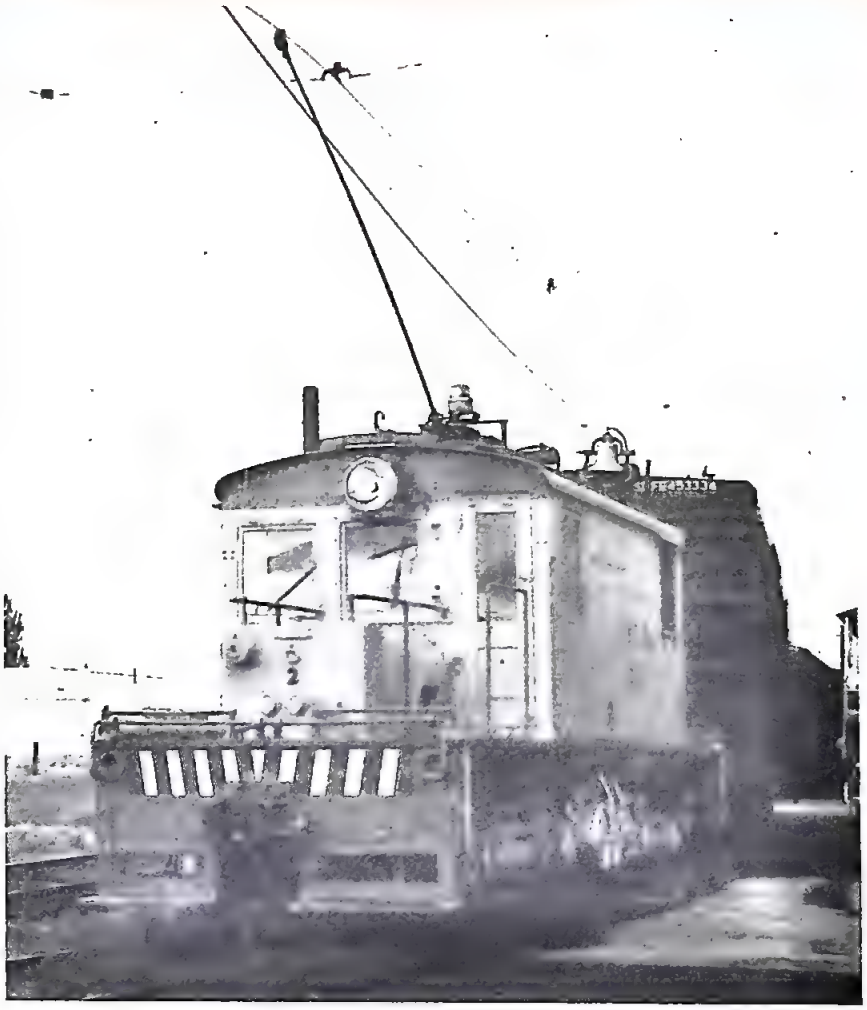
Freight was profitable for many years, but finally in the 1950s deficits developed, and the operation was sold to the newly formed Iowa Terminal.

Serious motive power problems became apparent almost immediately, and the new owners scoured the country for used equipment. Two engines were found on the Kansas City-Kaw Valley, express motors came from the defunct Chicago, North Shore & Milwaukee, and in Canada five locomotives were purchased from the Lake Erie & Northern and the Grand River Railway. Some were placed in operation; others were cannibalized to keep their brethren running.

Gradually things improved. Track long unused was pulled up, reliable service was provided to on-line industries, and a former Waterloo, Cedar Falls & Northern interurban car was even acquired.

Then on Thanksgiving Day, 1967 the barn and shops were destroyed by fire. Four pieces of equipment, including the passenger car, were lost, but much more serious was the loss of virtually irreplaceable spare parts and shop equipment. These were vital if the surviving equipment was to be kept rolling.

Less than this had done in many other electrics, but surprisingly the IT decided to rebuild and retain electric power. Another search turned up more used equipment, and a former North Shore passenger car also appeared.



Baldwin-Westinghouse developed a standardized locomotive design which was produced in quantity in the 1910-1930 period, and Yakima Valley 297 is a good specimen. **Wayne Hom**

Track was still in bad shape, to the point where its condition deterred establishment of new industries along the line. In 1969 a rehabilitation program was started, resulting in decisions by several companies to locate where the division could serve them. The power system, long a problem, was upgraded, and equipment maintenance was absolutely first class. In addition to keeping his own locomotives in shape, Master Mechanic Edwin E. Allen even found shop time for rehabilitation of trolleys owned by the Old Settlers and Threshers Association of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. Mr. Allen has since gone to Cleveland, Ohio to minister to the PCCs of the Shaker Rapid.

The division continues to operate with four Baldwin-Westinghouse steeple cabs, another steeple cab built from scratch in the Texas Electric Railway's Monroe Shops in 1928, and a former North Shore express car. The ex-TE locomotive is the newest locomotive in trolley freight service today, if one doesn't count another TE product still in service in San Antonio, which was built in 1932 from a much older passenger car. The North Shore passenger car is used for "inspections."

The reasons for continued electric operation are hard to find. It appears that the electrics can do little here that a smaller number of diesels couldn't do as well—probably at lower cost. As at Yakima, one wonders how much longer parts can be scrounged to keep these 50-year-old veterans running.

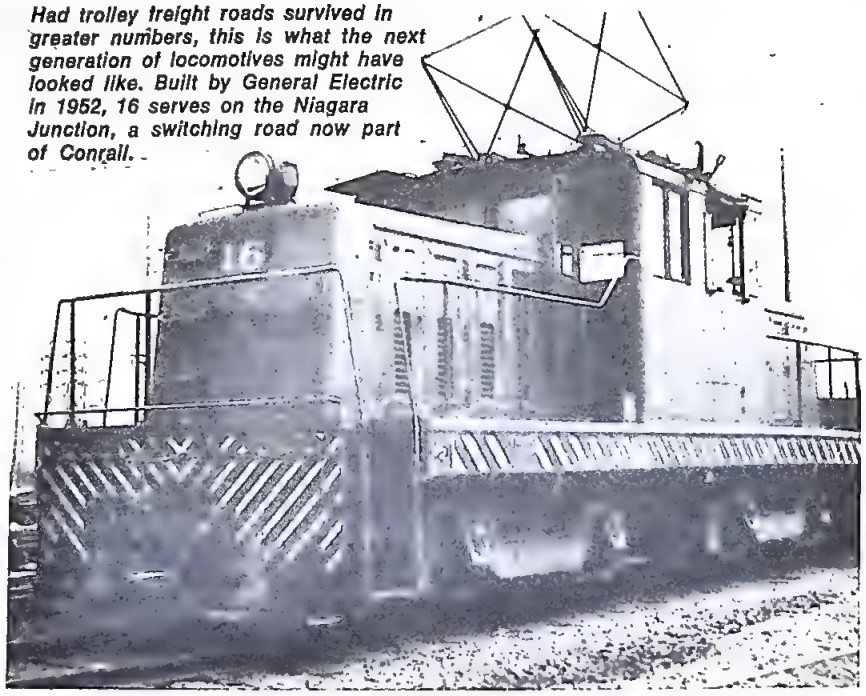
A query to the company went unanswered, so the author must speculate. And the facts seem to lead to one conclusion. Despite the set backs and the economic disadvantages, management appears to retain electricity simply because they like it. This is perhaps simplistic reasoning, but it is certainly understandable to the juice fan.

So we move to Wisconsin, where The Milwaukee Electric Railway & Light Company was once the proprietor of one of the best-run interurbans in the United States. But like others, TMER&L in the 1930s concluded that the private auto and the truck had

won and began to abandon their lines. The Village of East Troy, however, felt that while they didn't need passenger service, the freight service should continue, when in 1939 the company proposed abandonment.

As a result this small community (population 1689 in 1970) became the owner of 7.2 miles of track between the Village and Mukwonago Junction. At first it was leased back for operation by the TMER&L, but when the company refused to continue the arrangement in 1949, the municipality became one of the very few in the United States to both own and operate its own railroad. It continues to do so today.

As far as electric operation is concerned, however, the case might be that inclusion in this article is not appropriate. There is a municipally owned electric locomotive, the former M-15 of the TMER&L, on the property, the wire is still up all the way to the junction and the connection with the Soo Line, and in answer to an inquiry the Village stated that they still operated with both diesel and electricity. Others report, however, that the M-15 is very rarely used and that virtually all freight moves behind the diesel, which is also owned by the Village. Apparently electric operation is still possible, but as far as freight is concerned could best be described as being in a state of suspended animation, a condition which has lasted for some time.



Had trolley freight roads survived in greater numbers, this is what the next generation of locomotives might have looked like. Built by General Electric in 1952, 16 serves on the Niagara Junction, a switching road now part of Conrail.

In 1978 it was possible, however, to ride over the line in an interurban car. The East Troy Trolley Museum, following several years of "cliffhanger" existence due to legal problems, still operates cars from the North Shore and other lines on five miles between East Troy and their barn. The museum, which is owned by the Wisconsin Electric Railway Historical Society, also has the largest collection of trolley freight locomotives from a single line in the country. There are eight, all from the TMER&L, and several pieces of work equipment, including a Differential dump car used at one time by the Village as a locomotive. At this writing the legal problems appear to have been solved, and the museum's future seems bright as long as the Village keeps the wire up on the line.

TTC 1 seen here was an ex-San Antonio streetcar. Owner Pearl Brewery wasn't backward about using it as an advertising medium.

The high standards of maintenance practiced by the Iowa Terminal are apparent in Baldwin-Westinghouse-built 54.

Crossed fingers would seem to be called for.

While debate is possible as to whether the East Troy is an electric operation, there can be no question about the Texas Transportation Company at San Antonio. This line could never have been called an interurban, but for virtually all of its existence it has certainly been trolley freight.

In the late 1880s a standard gauge mule car line began operations on Jones Avenue in the Alamo City. Its value as a freight connection was soon apparent to its owners, and in violation of the franchise they began to use steam locomotives to move cars over it between the Texas & New Orleans (now Southern Pacific) and the International Great Northern (now Missouri Pacific). For several years the city fathers turned a blind eye toward Jones Avenue, but after prodding from a local newspaper the authorities decided to put a stop to the practice. In 1897 a 50-year franchise was granted the company allowing continued movement of freight, but with the proviso that "only motors propelled by electricity" could be used.

In September, 1898 electric service began to the Lone Star and Pearl breweries and a few other customers. The nature of one of the first pair of locomotives is not known, but number 2 was turned out by the St. Louis Car Company especially for the service, making it one of the earliest trolley freight motors in the country. Apparently passenger service disappeared with the mules, and TTC has been a freight-only operation ever since, although the Texas Transportation Museum has operated a single truck open car from Vera Cruz, Mexico over the line on occasion.

The original 2½ miles of track have shrunk to 1.1 miles between the Southern Pacific interchange and the Pearl Brewery, and the line is dependent on Pearl for its traffic. Until 1970 the line was jointly owned by the San Antonio City Public Service Board and Pearl, but now it is a wholly owned subsidiary of the brewery. Virtually all traffic consists of inbound ingredients and outbound beer.

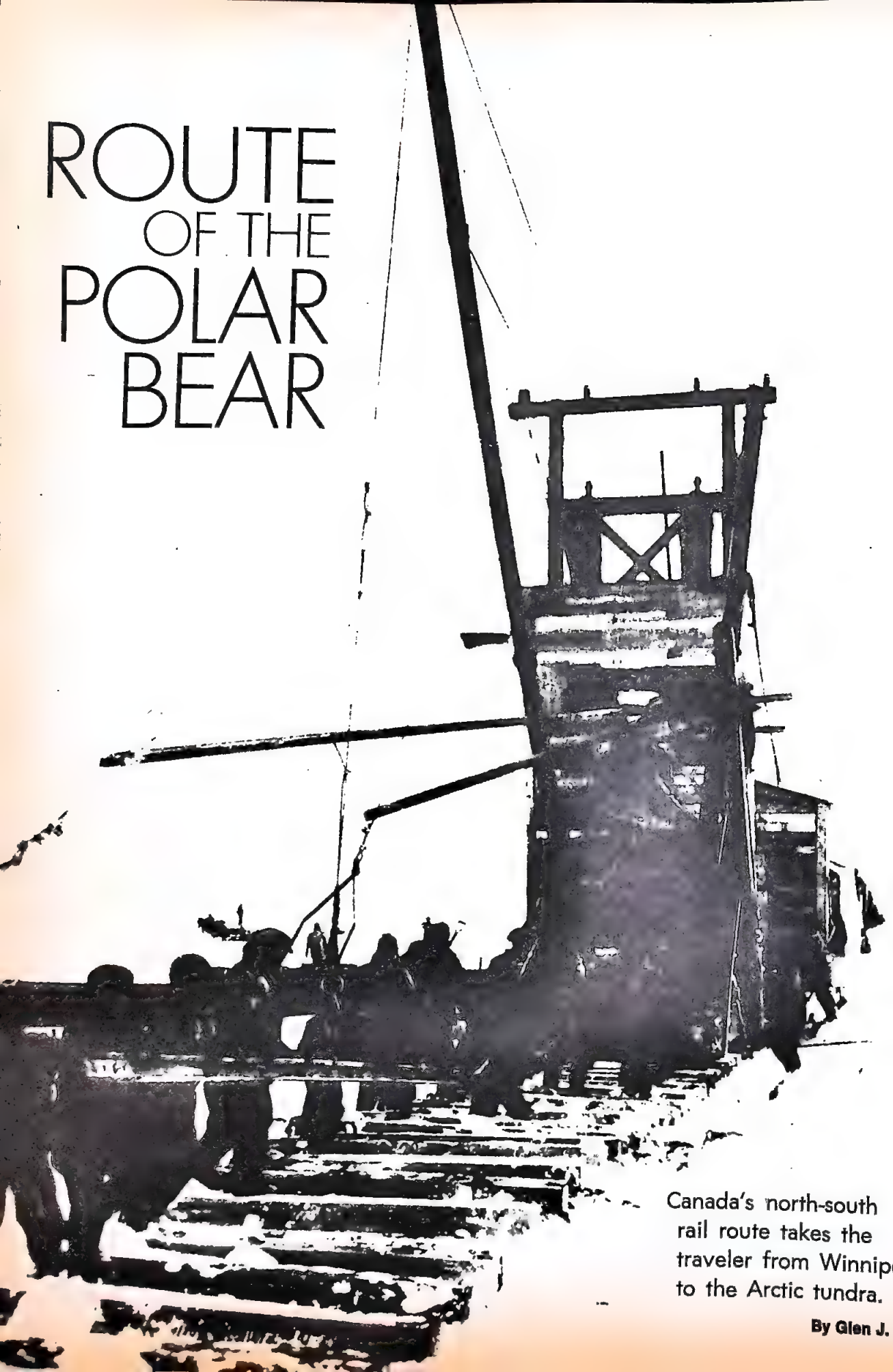
The two original locomotives were retired in the 1930s and the two replacements were themselves replaced a few years ago. The third pair consists of a Baldwin-Westinghouse steeple cab (number 1) and a home-built from the Texas Electric (number 2). Number 1 was turned out in 1917 for the Monongehela West Penn Public Service, for whom it brought coal drags down out of the West Virginia mountains. It came to TTC by way of the Kansas City-Kaw Valley. Number 2 could be said to be either the oldest or newest trolley freight locomotive in common carrier service in the United States. Built as a passenger car in 1908, it emerged from the Monroe shops of the Texas Electric as a new Class C motor in 1933.

Presumably as long as the residents of Texas and adjoining states continue to consume Pearl Beer in copius quantities and as long as the brewery finds rail transport to be to its advantage, TTC will continue to shuffle cars along Jones Avenue (except during rush hours), since the franchise was renewed for another 50 years, to expire in 1997.

Readers may question why the electrically operated Niagara Junction Railway at Niagara Falls, New York, is not given prominent treatment in this article. The Niagara Junction at this writing is most certainly electric, providing

(Continued on page 82)

ROUTE OF THE POLAR BEAR



Canada's north-south rail route takes the traveler from Winnipeg to the Arctic tundra.

By Glen J. Lathrop

"Portage-la-Prairie first stop," said the conductor as he walked through the lounge car. Instinctively I checked my timetable and found that we were running on time. This was train #93 of Canadian National which starts in Winnipeg and runs nearly 1000 miles north to the remote seaport town of Churchill on the western shore of Hudson Bay. This is one of the few railroads in Canada which runs in a north-south direction. During a rush of activity in the summer when the bay is clear of ice for about 88 days, some 30 million bushels of grain are shipped over the railroad to Churchill to be loaded onto ships for European markets.

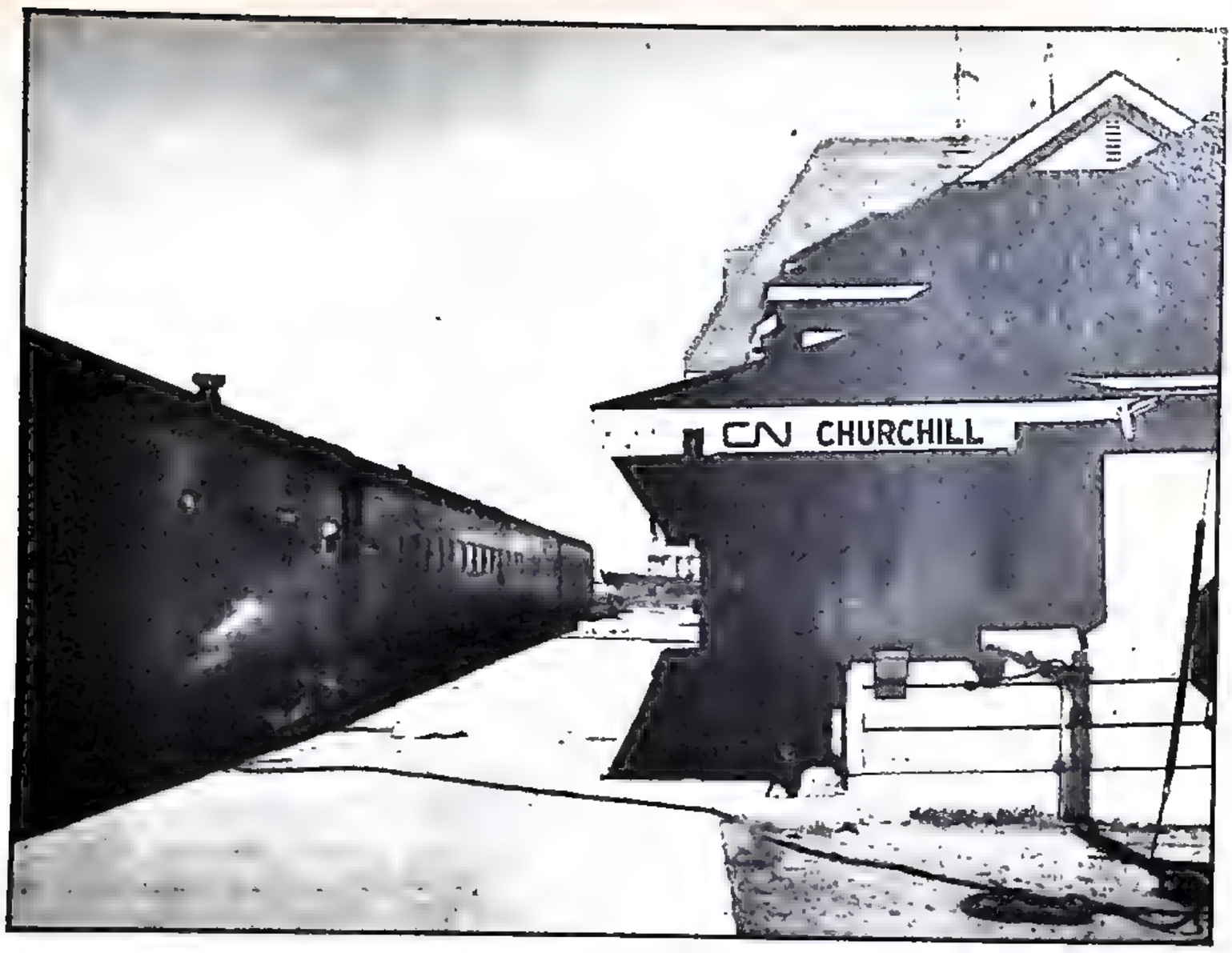
The only land route to Churchill is the railroad as the nearest road is some 350 miles away. But it took 53 years of political, economic and physical obstacles before this railroad came into being.

The history of the Hudson Bay Railroad began in the 1870s when political leaders and midwestern farmers were anxious for a railroad connection between Winnipeg and Hudson Bay. Politicians felt that the railroad would encourage development of the area and the farmers wanted access to a seaport not controlled by eastern in-

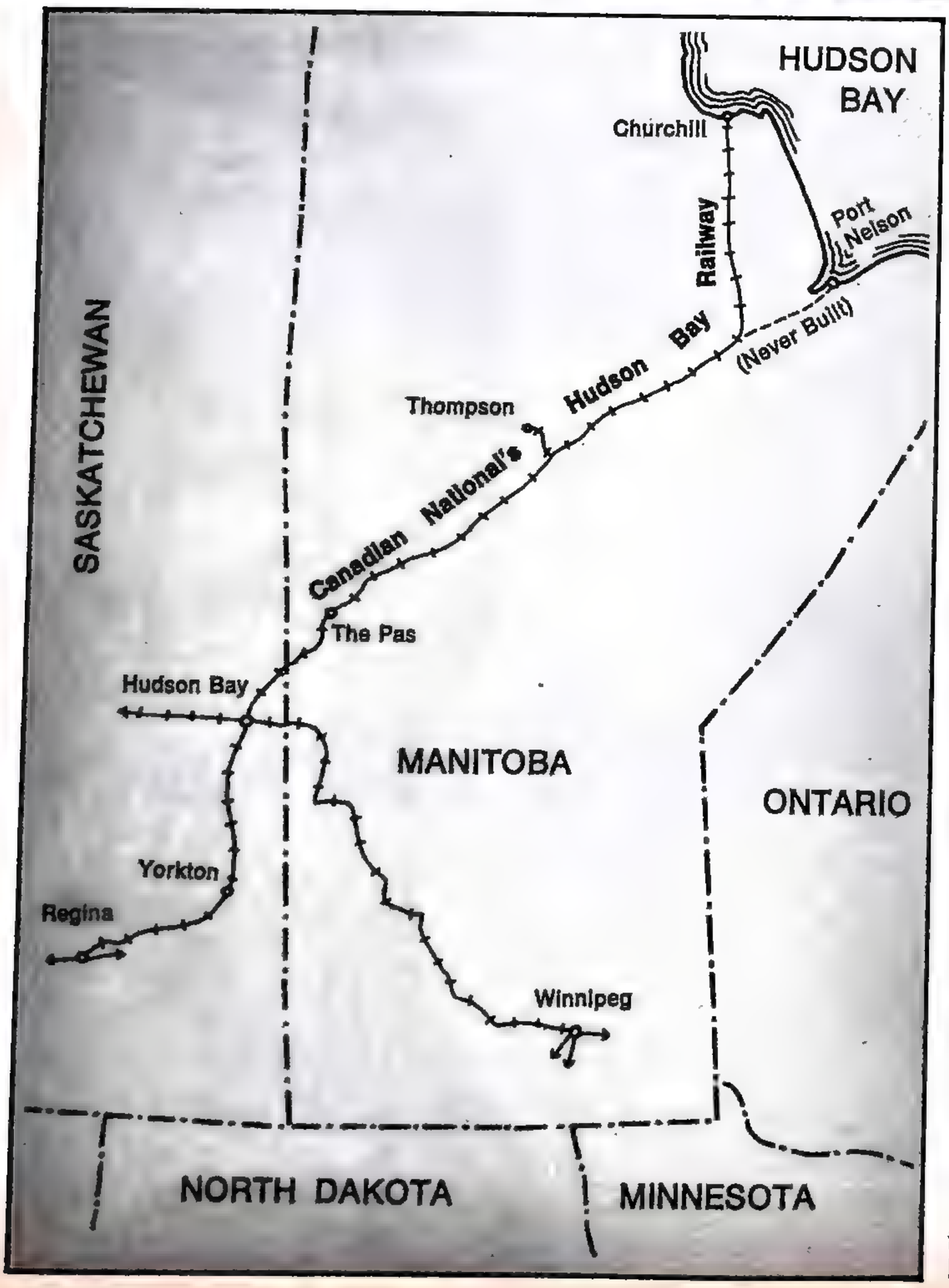
Bound for Churchill, train #93 pauses at The Pas.

Easy to survey, the tundra presented problems to builders. Tripod utility poles resist frost action.

This 2,640-foot bridge at Port Nelson, built before World War I, never carried a train. This bridge and 11 miles of track were abandoned in favor of a port at Churchill. Manitoba Archives



Trains arrive at the CN station in Churchill three days a week at 8 in the morning, then depart at 5:30 that evening.



terests. The distance from Winnipeg to Liverpool, England was about 400 miles shorter via Hudson Bay than via Montreal.

Local businessmen organized to build it with private funds and were granted a charter in 1877 to construct the Winnipeg & Hudson Bay Railway and Steamship Company. The only problem was that the available funds would only build a few miles of track. Eastern economic groups were not interested in supporting a possible competitor.

In 1908, thirty-one years after the initial charter, the railroad was under the control of Canadian Northern and had only reached the town of The Pas. There were still 510 cold, frozen miles to go to the bay. Then Canadian Parliament voted to fund the construction. Enthusiastic supporters claimed the project would transform Hudson Bay into the Mediterranean of Canada. It was hard to picture a warm Mediterranean quality to a region that was blocked with ice for 250 days out of the year, but the support of Parliament assured completion of the railroad.

As construction crews were organized in The Pas, the question of where to locate a terminal on the bay arose. Several survey parties had studied the area and the Churchill River area was generally favored. Its natural deep water port with a hard, rocky shoreline had been used for 200 years by the Hudson Bay Trading Company. However the savings of a route, shorter by almost 100 miles, seemed more important than the depth of the harbor so Parliament chose to follow the Nelson River to intercept the bay at Port Nelson.

Work began in 1912 and proceeded to mile post 296, less than 100 miles from Port Nelson when the project was halted by World War I. When construction was resumed in the late 1920s, the engineers had obtained approval to move the railhead to Churchill. Because the country was flat, it was not necessary to conduct any extensive survey for the new route and so track crews simply made a sharp left turn and headed north to Churchill. This routing is still in use today and the change-of-mind curve is apparent in most maps of the railroad.

The technique for building the railroad used two work trains. The first was a gravel train and it traveled on its own set of temporary tracks. As it traveled along the right-of-way it would lay base gravel in preparation for a

Box cars being switched at the Churchill elevator.

second train which laid ties and rail on the completed base. The first train would then return to ballast the completed rail. This technique presented the usual set of problems that any two trains face when working a single track, but with occasional sidings, the system worked well.

As they moved north, the situation changed. On the surface, the land appeared to be a railroad builder's dream. It was perfectly flat and there weren't even any trees to cut. Beneath the surface, it was another story. The ground consisted of peat bogs called muskeg holes and permafrost. The muskeg holes, which were confronted first, were several hundred feet deep and it was often necessary to dump an entire train-load of gravel into the holes before the ground would firm up enough for rail. The ground was so soft for the most part that the two-train technique would not work and it was necessary to use men and wheel barrows for much of the construction. The men also had a great deal of trouble and it was not uncommon to pull fellow workers out of neck-deep muskeg. To solve this problem, planks were laid along the road bed for the men to walk on. Most of these boards

A new fire truck for Baker Lake arrives by flat car at the Churchill docks.

were later a convenient source of material for snow fences.

After the muskeg was conquered, the crews came to the permafrost. At first the solid ground seemed a welcome sight after the soggy muskeg. They simply laid gravel on top of the frozen ground and continued laying ties and rail. But as the gravel heated up in the sun, it would melt down into the permafrost and soon the roadbed was transformed into a trench of water with ties and rail floating on the surface.

Engineers searched for something to place on top of the permafrost to insulate it from the gravel. Ironically, muskeg, the very thing that had almost blocked construction a few miles back, was found to be ideally suited and readily abundant. So, on a subbase of moss, the tracks continued to Churchill.

In the fall of 1929, track had reached within 60 miles of Churchill. Crews had previously been laid off in winter because of severe weather but now engineers were anxious to reach the bay. Track laid in the winter would have to be of temporary construction. All gravel pits were frozen solid and so were the muskeg holes, making them impossible to fill.

Ties were laid directly on the frozen ground. Forty-below temperatures slowed construction and on March 29, 1930 the telegrapher sent out his message that "Steel reached Churchill today."

A quickly-organized golden spike special made the run on the completed railroad, arriving in Churchill on April 3. The group was lacking a golden spike and so a steel one wrapped in tin foil was used instead. Considering the financial problems that had slowed construction in the early days, this spike was much more appropriate.

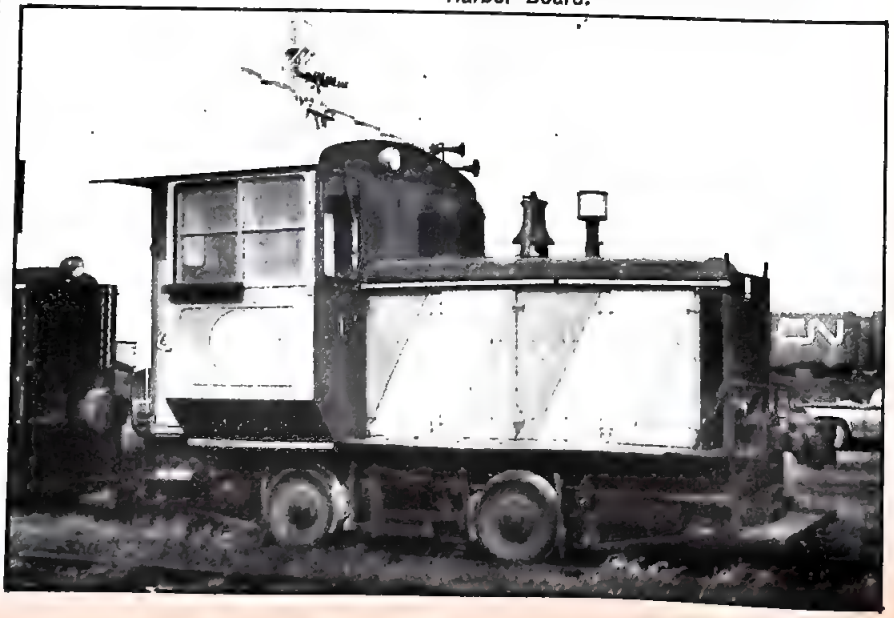
During the next month before warm weather turned the temporary track into a useless, floating roadbed, trains made the slow trip to Churchill over snow ballasted rails, carrying most of the 2000 men and materials necessary to construct railyard, round house and a 2.5 million bushel grain elevator.

When the spring thaw arrived, crews returned to complete the final 60 miles of track. Churchill was without its rail connection for the summer, but by September the crews brought a permanent roadbed into town and the railroad no longer operated on a winter-only schedule.

In the summer of 1978, 47 years after the first ships had sailed from Churchill with Canadian wheat for Europe, I was traveling to Churchill over what is still called the Hudson Bay Railroad even though it's now

Building the original roadbed into Churchill, ties were laid directly on the snow to speed construction.
Manitoba Archives

Tiny four-wheel Plymouth switchers are used at Churchill by the National Harbor Board.



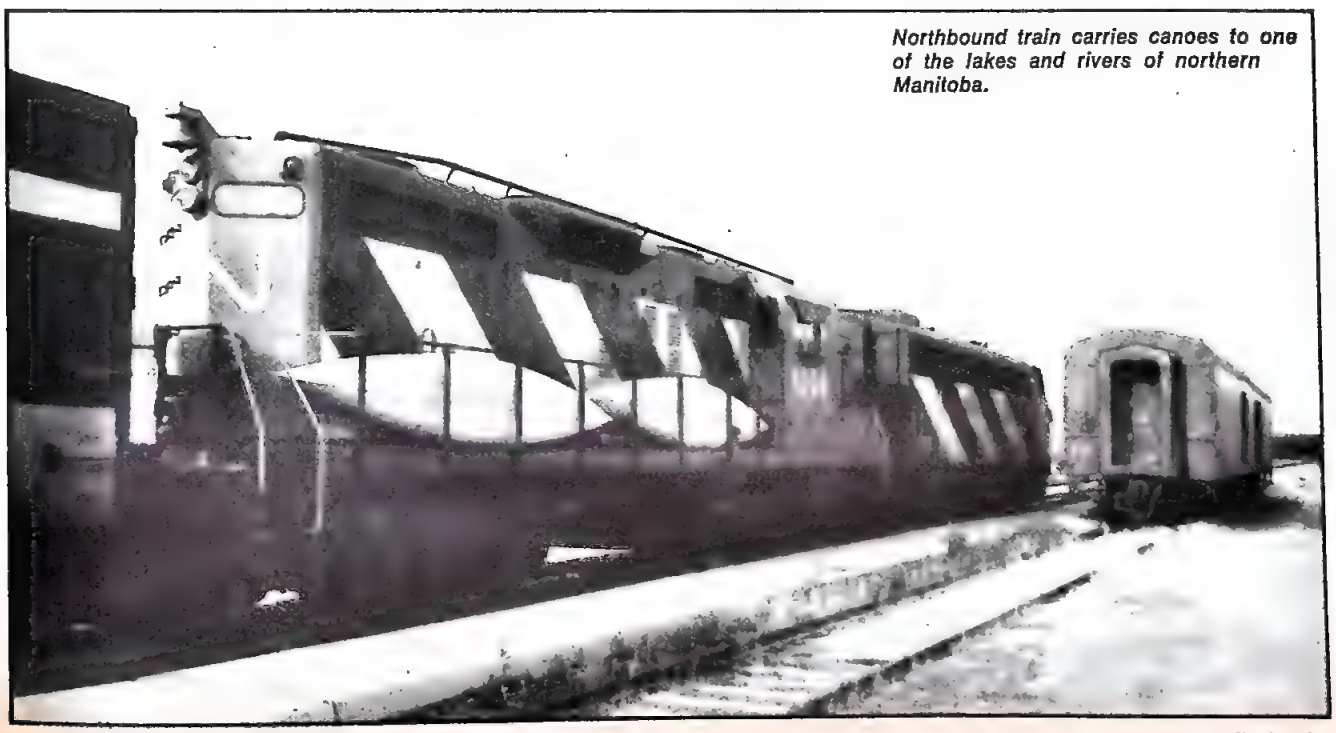
Five million bushel grain elevator at Churchill dwarfs the box cars along its side.

Canadian National property. Relaxing in the lounge car, I asked the attendant if he knew much about the history of the railroad.

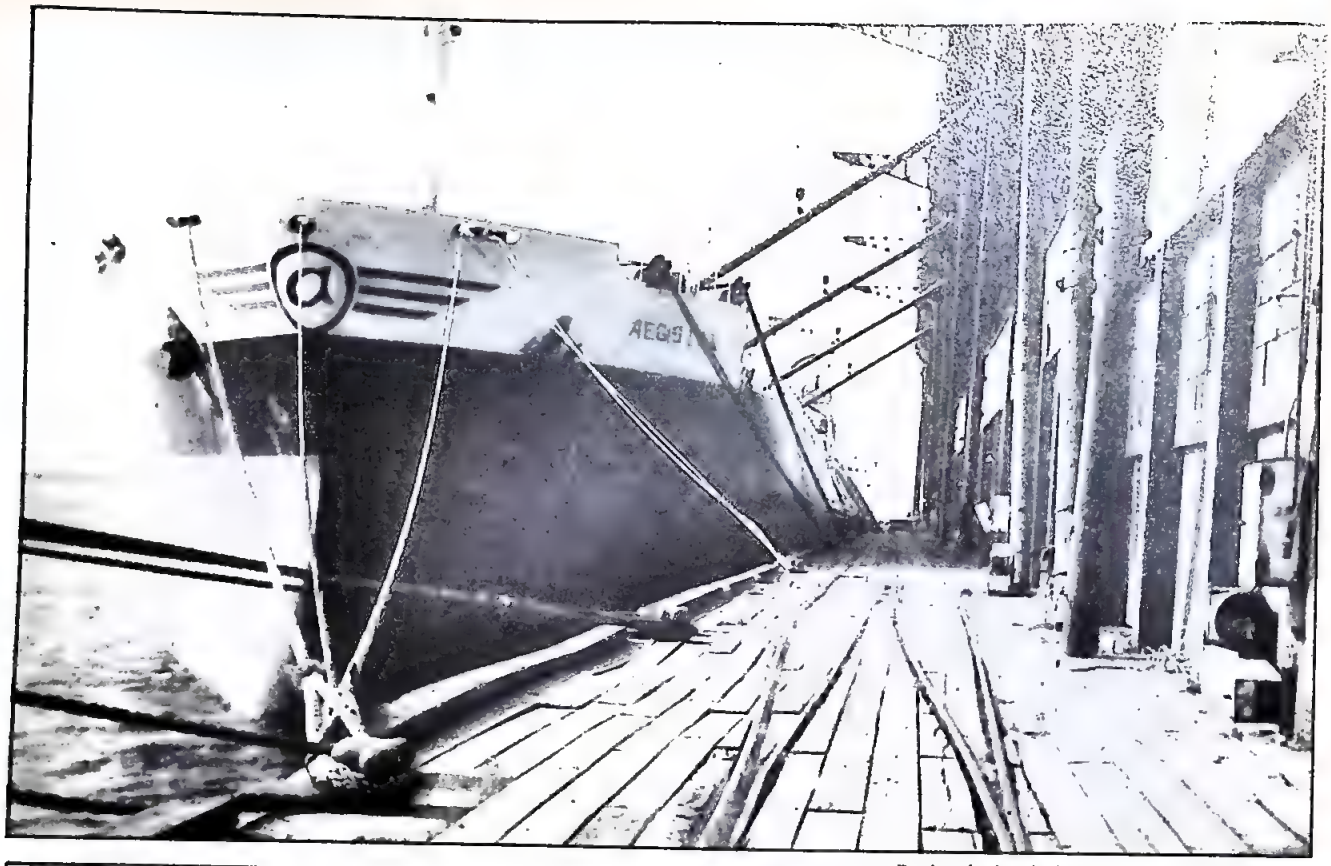
One of his stories was one I had heard several times before and I have often wondered if it really happened or whether it is just a Hudson Bay folk tale. As the story goes, a work train was returning to a construction camp one night when it derailed and skidded off the track. The crew realized there was nothing they could do and so walked back to camp. The next morning, the wrecking crew found the engine and three cars were gone. At first the crew was accused of being out on an all-night drunk, but later it was found that the train was indeed missing. Upon further investigation it was concluded that the engine must have come into contact with the permafrost. The hot boiler had melted its way into the ice, pulling the three cars with it. Soggy peat then flowed into the hole and the train was gone without a trace. I was assured that like some woolly mammoth, a steam engine was still frozen in the ice waiting to be discovered.

The first day out of Winnipeg, the countryside had been one wheat field after another. On the second day, however, the view changed entirely to forests. Stopping at The Pas for crew change and engine servicing, there was an hour-and-forty-minute layover, giving me a good chance to get off and take some photos. Looking over our train, I noted that the second engine now had some auxiliary equipment in the form of two canoes sitting on the running boards. There may be something in the rule book against this, but nobody seemed to be enforcing rules this far north.

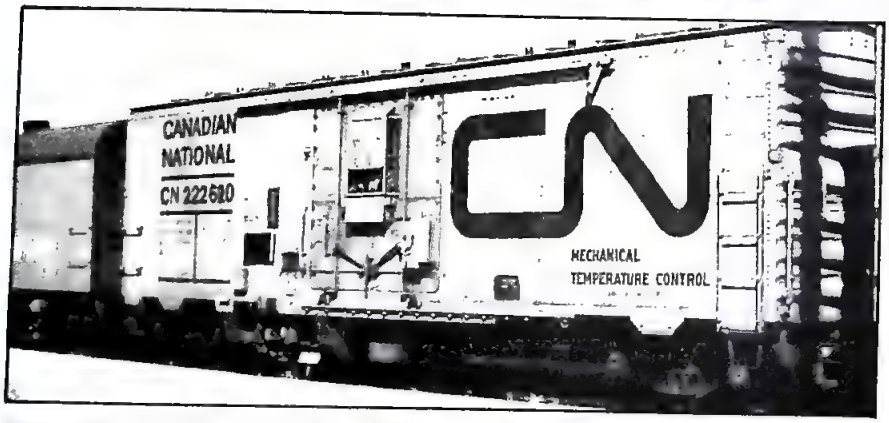
The rest of our train consisted of two refrigerator box cars, equipped with steam lines so they could be operated in passenger service, bringing fresh food to Churchill. Next was a baggage car that seemed to have more dogs than baggage. Then there was a snack car, three coaches, a diner, lounge car and two sleepers. Walking down to the yard, I spotted several old heavyweight coaches used



Northbound train carries canoes to one of the lakes and rivers of northern Manitoba.



Barley is loaded on ship at Churchill after 1000-mile rail trip from Canada's midwestern grain fields.



Refrigerator cars with through connections for steam lines are used on the passenger train to Churchill.

Extra electrical power used at Churchill in the summer is supplied by these mobile power plants on rails.

in mixed train service to areas north of The Pas.

Continuing, lakes and rivers became as common as the wheat fields of the day before. The train began to make occasional flag stops from the 85 listed in the timetable, but fortunately the train does not make them all. At one point the train stopped with the baggage car on a bridge and the clerk began throwing lumber into the river. At first I thought he had flipped out, but later I found that the lumber would float down stream to a nearby cabin.

Heading north I frequently had the desire to climb on the train roof for a better view. The land in this area is so flat and the trees so close to the train that it is difficult to see more than just a short distance. After a few hours, however, there was a chance to get off in the town of Thompson. This is another servicing point with an hour-and-a-half layover, just enough time for a short tour of town. Thompson, a major nickel-producing area, is the largest city in northern Manitoba and the farthest reach of the Canadian highway network. From this point north the train is the only means of transportation.

VIA Rail tour brings this observation car into Churchill.

Baggage is unloaded at Churchill depot.

The segment between Thompson and Churchill is described in the tour folders as a leisurely journey across arctic tundra. This is because the soft ground beneath the roadbed limits the train to 30 miles per hour for the 350-mile trip. From Thompson south there is a lot of year-around traffic from the mines and so the roadbed receives better maintenance than the section to Churchill which mainly operates just during the summer.

I had hoped that the slow speed would make for a more comfortable night's sleep, but the further north we got the worse the roadbed got. As I held on to my berth, trying to sleep, I wondered if it had been this bad on the old Muskeg Special run. When the sun finally did come up the next morning, the view was totally different from the first two days. We were on the tundra and there was not a tree in sight. That morning in the diner, the topic of conversation was the roadbed rather than the scenery.

A few miles outside of Churchill at the village of Akudluk, the train is turned on a wye and backs the final stretch into town. When we arrived, it was cold, windy and raining.

The switchers here handle some 450 carloads a week during the summer. Most of the cars that arrive on the three freights a week are taken to the grain elevator. Other cars are taken to the dock area where the contents are loaded on barges for transport to Eskimo villages around the bay. All switching around the yards and grain elevator is by CN equipment. At the docks, two small four-wheelers owned by the National Harbor Board spot the cars.

Talking with a switching crew, I heard of a complaint that I had never heard before from railroaders: polar bears in the yard. Every fall the bears migrate through town and a favorite path is right down the tracks. Fortunately the bears don't arrive until mid-September so I figured it was safe to walk around the yards.

All visitor activities in Churchill center around the three days a week known as Train Days by the locals. One Train Day event is the tour of the grain elevator, including the box car unloading area. Cars are pulled on to a rocking platform by cables. The doors are opened and a large diverting plate is inserted into the car at right angles to the door. The end of the car is then raised and, as the grain falls toward the other end, it hits the plate and falls out to conveyors below the track. The process is then reversed for grain at the other end and the car is empty in twenty minutes.

On the four non-Train Days each week, activities are pretty quiet. There is a walking tour, but if it's raining the best place to spend the afternoon is in the library. One article I found was written by the Hudson Bay Association promoting the Great Transcontinental Short Line Railway. This route, first suggested in 1884, would connect with the HBR at Churchill and traverse northern Canada to the Pacific Coast around Prince Rupert. The railroad would permit access to the vast interior of northern Canada, but the time for this project still has not come.

A more immediate concern of the Hudson Bay Association is fuller utilization of present facilities. The vast majority of box cars returning to Winnipeg are empty so the association would like to interest importers in using the bay route.

Even at the present rate the future for the railroad looks good. From the one million bushels that were shipped back in 1931, the number has grown to an estimated 35 million bushels in 1978.

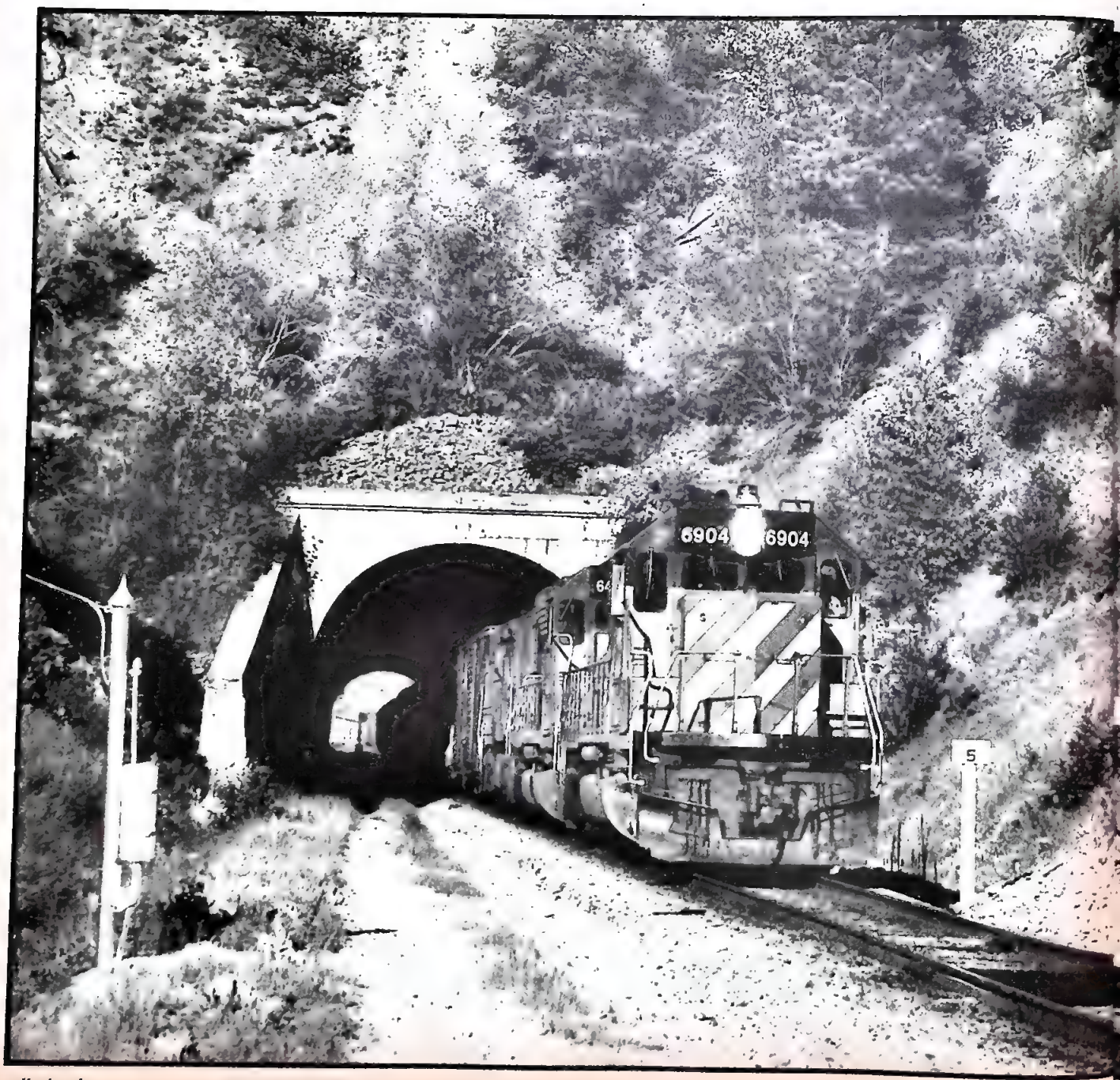
After spending two rainy days in the Churchill library, I was ready to depart on the next Train Day for the sunny south.

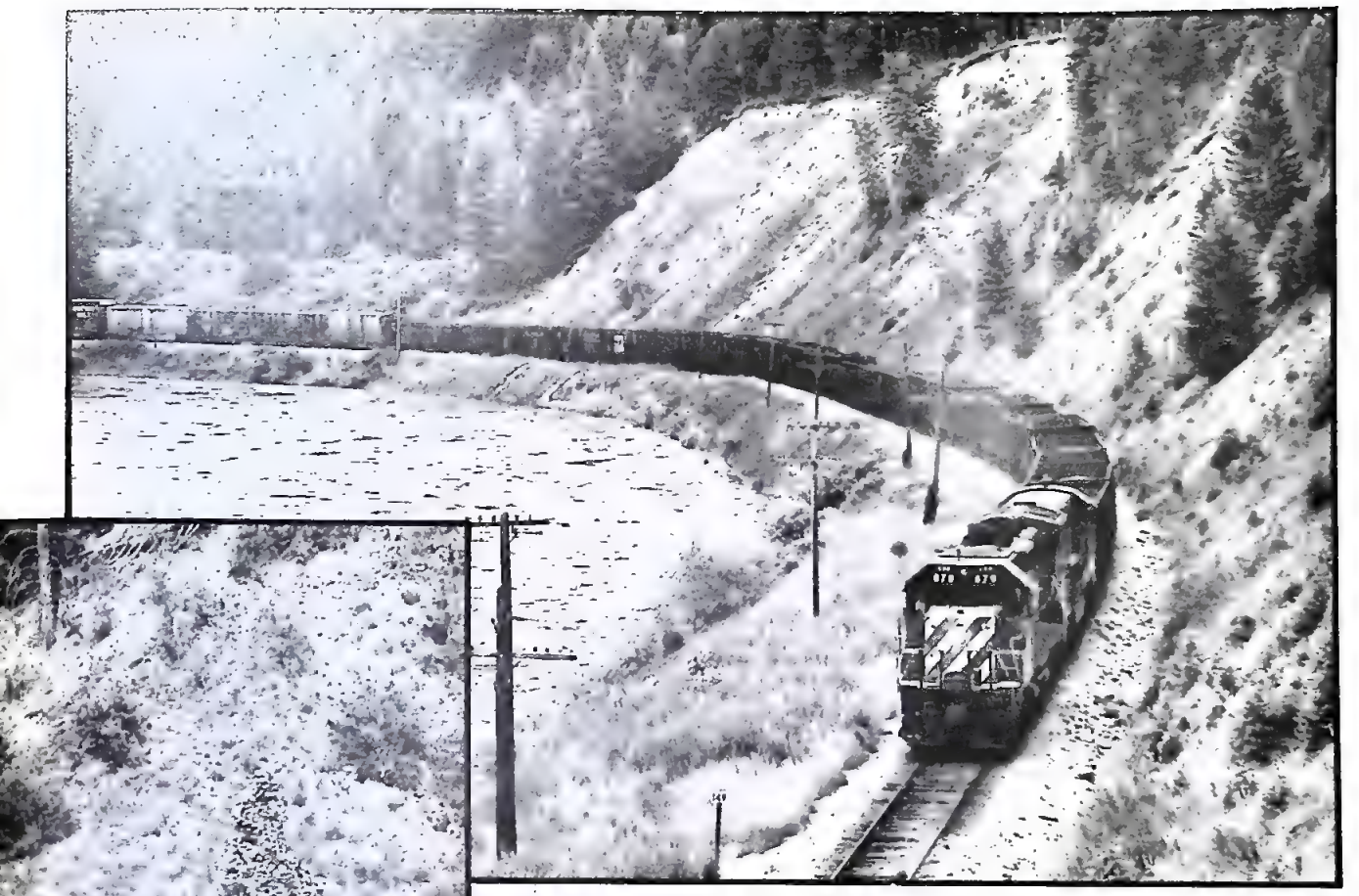
TRAIN WATCHING AT MISSOULA

Photos by the author

Burlington Northern provides tremendous action in Montana

By Bill Jolitz





A dispatcher's dilemma. The Third Subdivision route to Paradise is almost 30 miles shorter than the Fifth Sub, but trains face the steep Evaro Hill. The Fifth Sub river route has an easier grade, but there are clearance restrictions on high/wide cars. Here, a westbound with C&S power on the point hugs the riverbank about a mile east of the siding at Lothrop.

In the steam days, much of the division was double tracked. All the conveniences of contemporary railroading obsolesced much of the second main save for the sidings. Now, the extra right of way provides easy access for rubber-tired maintenance vehicles. No. 6904 hurries its consist through Tunnel 5 at Beavertail, about 30 miles east of Missoula.

The Burlington Northern's Rocky Mountain Division is BIG. Stretching from Laurel, Montana, and Casper, Wyoming, in the east to Kootenai, Idaho, in the west, it is composed of 1,060 miles of mainline and 504 miles of branch lines. The schematic gives an indication of the scope of the operation and indicates the location of division points.

Missoula, Montana, the division headquarters, is a very busy place. On an average day, between 12 and 15 east- and west-bound freights pass through. Amtrak makes an appearance on an every-other-day basis. Several branch and local freights are originated or terminated each week. Numerous local industries, especially paper and forest products, provide plenty of work for a switcher. Finally, the mini-hump classification yard keeps yet another crew busy. On almost any day, there is more than enough action to keep any railfan busy.

This is an ideal place for a motive power enthusiast. On the mainline, GE U-boats and EMD SD-40's SD-45's and cowl-noses hold down the points of through freights. A variety of Geeps, SD-9s and switchers power local and switching assignments. Several of the GP-9s sport hand-rocked bells reminiscent of the steam days.

Scenery and operations change dramatically at Missoula. From the east,

Going into the hole at Bonner.

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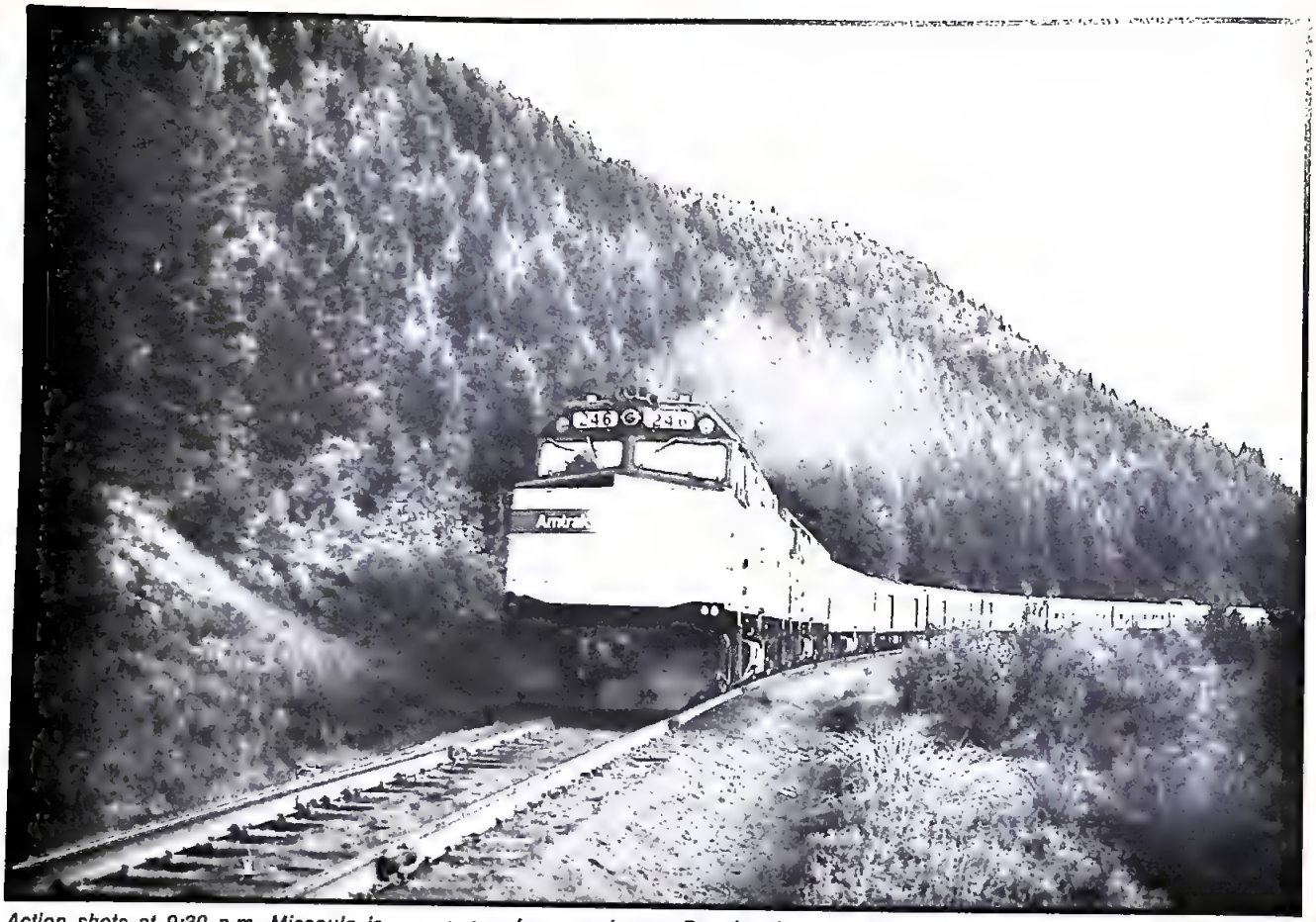


Action shots at 9:30 p.m. Missoula is so far north that during the summer, the sun doesn't set until late in the evening. Then, the twilight lingers for a couple more hours. Running late, Amtrak's remnant of the NP's NORTH COAST LIMITED hustles up Evaro Hill in an attempt to make up lost time.

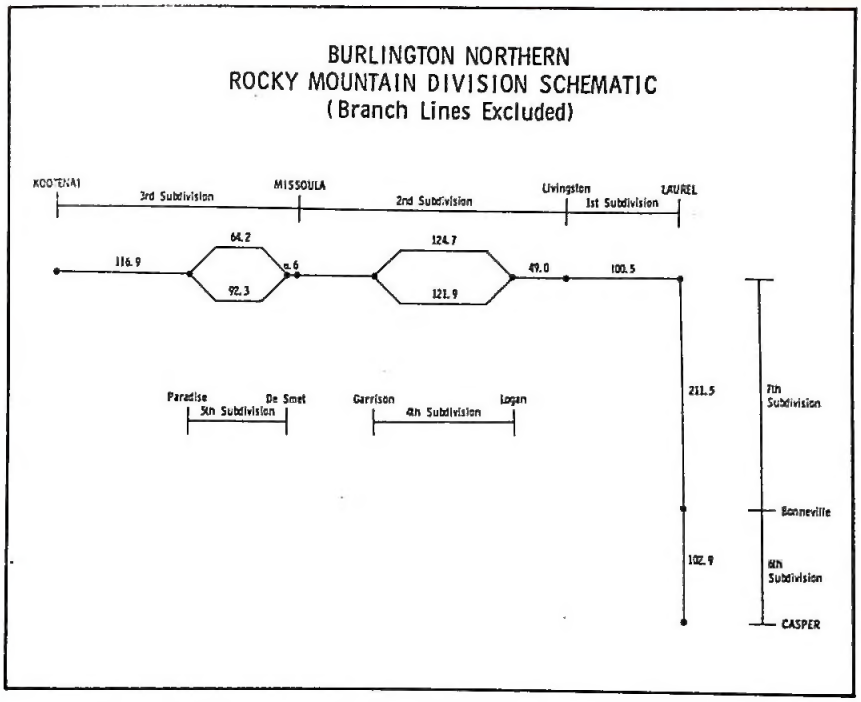
For several miles, BN's tracks are laid on a shelf above the Clark Fork. Because of spring runoff from a very heavy winter snowfall, the river level is higher than it has been in years. A pair of SD-45s is moving some of the BN's share of coke to British Columbia processing plants.

BN freights always seem to be in a hurry. Just when you expect to see a drag slugging it out with a ruling grade, a 50 mph hotshot roars by you. Here, the 6594 hurries its consist east.

It is just as true now as it was in the early days of mountain railroading: no matter how hard you try, sometimes it takes a long time to get a train to the next crew change point.

At the east end of Lothrop siding, the crew of train 174 was running hard, trying to reach Missoula before it outlawed. Time was tight, but, if nothing went wrong . . .

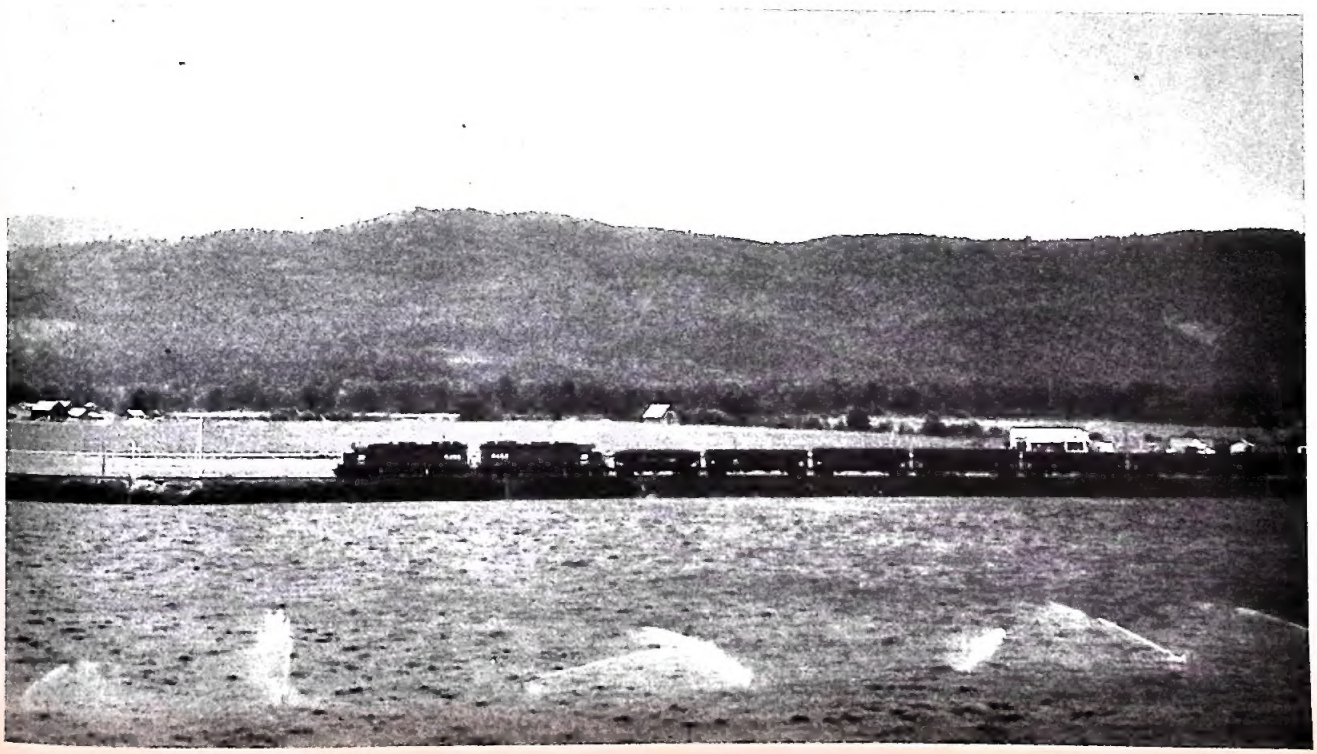
Famous last words. A Milwaukee Road freight reached the crossing diamond at Huson first. The 174 was not delayed for very long, but long enough for its men to run out of time very conveniently at the Frenchtown siding. The two U-boats idled softly, awaiting a fresh crew.



the BN main loops down the broad Clark Fork River valley floor, frequently paralleling the Milwaukee Road. The last few miles of track drops down a 2-plus percent grade into the Missoula yard. Approximately 6 miles west of Missoula at DeSmet, the mainline splits to penetrate the Reservation Divide Range of Mountains. The river route has gentle grades as it parallels the Clark Fork on a narrow shelf above the water, but clearance restrictions cause problems if a train has any high-wide cars in its consist. The line up Evaro Hill has no clearance problems and is 28 miles shorter, but the grade approaches 2.2 percent, necessitating helpers over this grade.

Missoula is a great place to watch trains. Within the city limits, yard and industrial trackage is easily accessible by car without trespassing on railroad or private property. Good highways make travel to distant locations fast and easy. And, once you arrive, numerous secondary highways and access roads penetrate the hills. Those who care to hike through the woods will be well rewarded with fantastic scenery for action shots.

The 6495-6468 drift the last few miles into the Missoula yard limit through heavily irrigated fields.



TROLLEY FREIGHT

(Continued from page 65)

switching service over 44 miles of track under substantial catenary with seven General Electric steeple cabs built in 1952. While an impressive operation, this electrified steam road, now a part of Conrail, is a far cry from the trolley freight service typical of the interurbans. The locomotives themselves are of interest, as they show what might have been developed for use on the interurbans, had more survived.

None of the remaining trolley freight lines would seem to have assurance of long life expectancy. Parts are a continuous problem, the economics are shaky, citizens object to trains of whatever type in the streets, and the special conditions surrounding their current status could change at any time.

If you want to be sure to see any of them, now is the time.

ELECTRIC EQUIPMENT OF REMAINING TROLLEY FREIGHT RAILROADS

Iowa Terminal Railroad

Number	Type	Builder & Order #	Year	Owners and Dates Acquired
33	Express car	Cincinnati 2720	1924	Chicago North Shore & Milwaukee #234 1924 Iowa Terminal #33 1963
2d 50	Steeple cab-50 ton	Baldwin-Westinghouse 53748	1920	Washington & Old Dominion #50 1920 Cedar Rapids & Iowa City #58 1948 Kansas City-Kaw Valley #507 1956 ITR #53 1963. Renumbered to #50
51	Steeple cab-50 ton	B-W 54748	1921	Northeast Oklahoma #2 1921 CR&IC #57 1940 KC-KV #505 1954 ITR #51 1963
2d 53	Steeple cab-55 ton	Texas Electric Ry	1928	TE #801 1928 Charles City Western #303 1949 ITR (Mason City Division) #53 1968
54	Steeple cab-50 ton	B-W 56538	1923	Southern Iowa Ry #400 1923 ITR #52(2d) 1968. Renumbered to 54
60	Steeple cab-60 ton	B-W 45659	1917	Youngstown & Ohio River #5 1917 Union Electric (Kansas) #80 1933 Mason City & Clear Lake 352 1948 ITR #2 1961. Renumbered to 60
101	Passenger car	McGuire-Cummings	1915	CCW #50 1915 ITR 1964 Stored at Charles City 1974
102	Passenger car	Cincinnati 2890	1926	CNS&M #727 1926 Iowa Chapter NRHS 1963 ITR 1969

Municipality of East Troy, Wisconsin

M-15	Box motor	TMERL	1920	The Milwaukee Electric Ry. & Light #M-15 1920 METW #M-15 1949

Texas Transportation Company

3d 1	Steeple cab-50 ton	B-W 47450	1917	Monongehela-West Penn #2000 1917 Kansas City-Kaw Valley #504 1947 TTC #1(3d) 1954
3d 2	Steeple cab	J.G. Brill/TERy	1908/1933	Built 1908 by J.G. Brill as Texas Traction #4 (passenger car) TERy #353 Rebuilt to freight motor #952 1933 TTC#2 (3d) 1948

Yakima Valley Transportation Company

297	Steeple cab-50 ton	B-W 56937	1923	Glendale & Montrose #22 1923 Union Pacific #E-100 YVT#297 1938
298	Steeple cab-50 ton	General Electric 8788	1922	YVT #298 1922

(The following two cars owned by the City of Yakima operate in excursion service over the YVT.)

1776	Single truck, deck	J.G. Brill	1920	Porto, Portugal 1920
1976	Roof street cars			Yakima 1974

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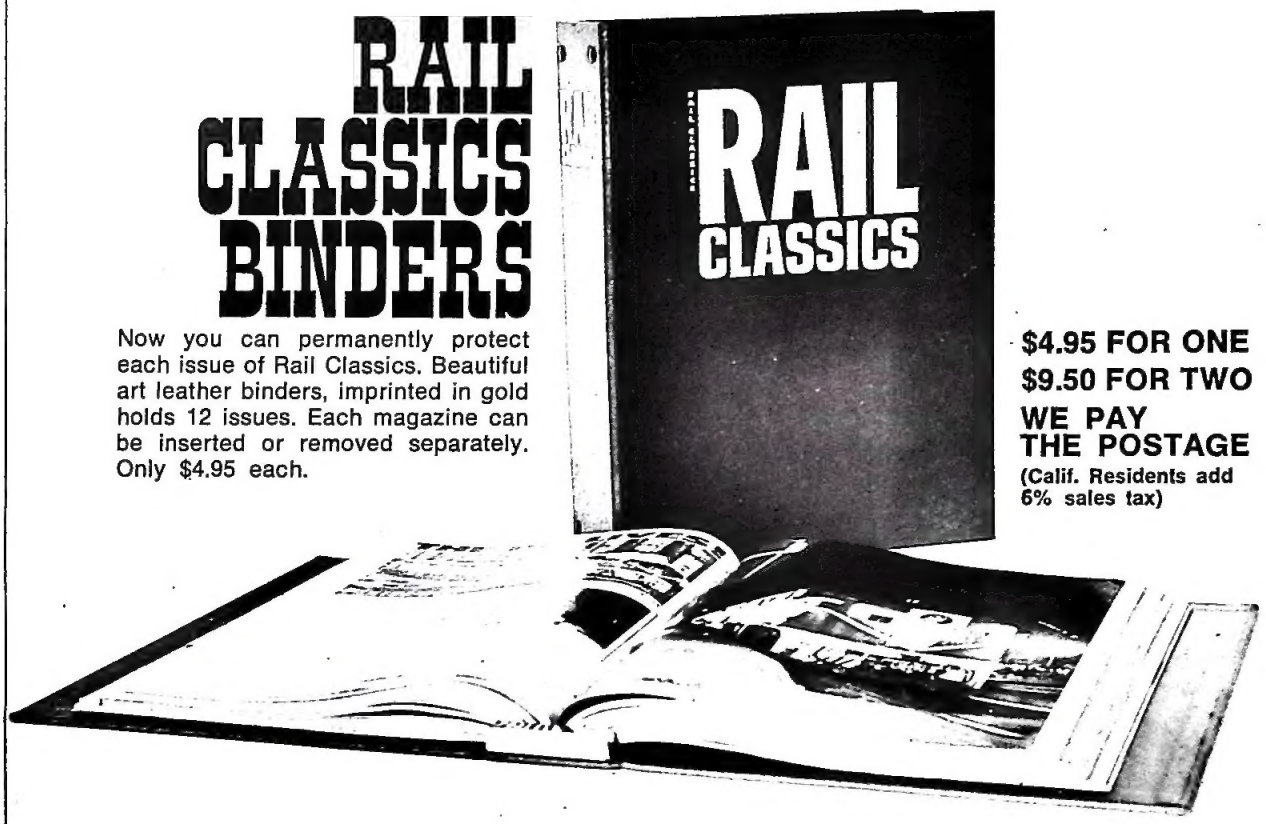

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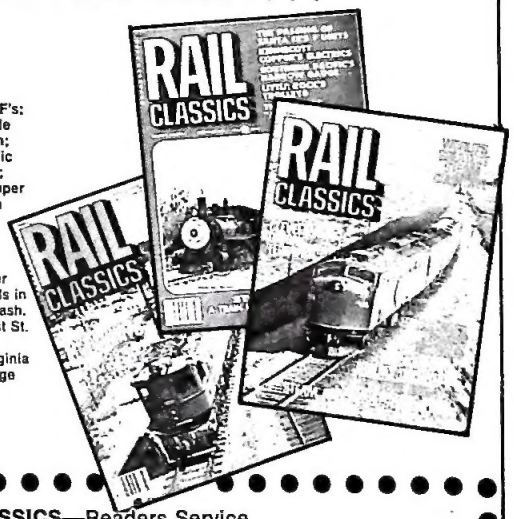

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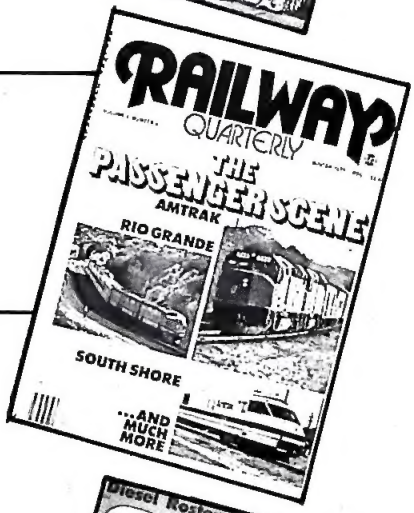

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